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Appropriate post-reading activities in the
EFL classes

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Resumé:

Práce se zabývá vhodnou formou aktivit prováděných po čtení v anglickém jazyce. Práce je členěna do tří částí. První se věnuje důležitosti čtení v naší kultuře a v jazykovém vzdělávání. Podrobně se věnuje celému procesu čtení a upřesňuje pojem vhodné aktivity prováděné po čtení. Druhá se věnuje shrnutí metodologických principů nezbytných pro výuku čtení a navazujících aktivit. Poslední část popisuje prostředí, uspořádání, uskutečnění a vyhodnocení praktického projektu, který byl uskutečněn za účelem prokázání účinků vhodných aktivit prováděných po čtení na jazykové kompetence žáků a jejich zapojení do hodiny. Přiložen je seznam literatury vztahující se k diplomové práci. V přílohách jsou: formulář "Zadání diplomové práce", titulní list DP a ukázky prací žáků.

Summary:

This thesis deals with appropriate post-reading activities in the EFL classroom environment. The thesis is divided into three parts. In the first part the thesis acknowledges the importance of reading in our culture and language learning. The reading process is examined in detail and the concept of an appropriate post-reading activity is clarified. In the second part some of the most crucial methodological principles are described. The last part comprises of the settings, organization, realization and evaluation of the practical project that had been carried out to determine the effects of appropriate post-reading activities, such as improved language proficiency and participation. The bibliography is included. In appendices there are attached "Diploma Thesis Registration Form", the front page of it, a sample of annotation, and sample outputs of students' activities.

RESUME:

Le mémoire traite de la forme appropriée des activités suivantes la lecture dans l'enseignement du EFL. Le mémoire comprend trois parties. La première partie de ce mémoire se penche sur l'importance de la lecture dans notre culture et dans l'enseignement des langues. La lecture est examinée en détail et l'esquisse de l'activité qui suit la lecture est précisée. La partie suivante résume les principes de la didactique indispensables pour l'enseignement de la lecture et les activités rattachantes. La dernière partie décrit l'environnement, l'organisation, la réalisation et l'évaluation du projet pratique réalisé dans le but de démontrer les effets des activités convenables suivantes la lecture sur la compétence linguistique des élèves et leur participation dans les cours. L'annexe : la bibliographie, le formulaire « Zadání diplomové práce », la première page du mémoire et les exhibitions des activités des élèves.

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A. Academic

1. The Growing Importance of Reading in our Culture and Language Teaching

All the children in our country are required by law to start their education by the time they turn six or seven years of age. One of the very first things every child is looking forward to learning in school and one of the first things they are taught in school is reading. Reading is not only one of the basic skills every child has to learn as they start their academic career. It is a skill that enables our very survival in today's modern society. Our environment is constantly changing and challenging us in an increasing rate by its change. The very society that humans created, the very environment that humans altered to their will and benefit requires us to learn more and more every day. This trend has been in development for some time now and it is not likely to stop in the future. What we are and how we are able to function in our world is determined by how much we know about it. Duffy et al comments on this trend by stating that

'Literacy changes as the world changes. Not too long ago, you were considered literate if you could read and write your name. More recently, the term "functional literacy" has been used; it refers to the reading level needed to function in society at any particular time. Functional literacy in 1950 was a fourth grade reading level; ten years or so later, it was a seventh grade reading level. (...) We are no longer an industrial society. We have moved into the Information Age, where knowledge proliferates at a previously unimaginable rate, where service-related jobs are the

major source of employment, and where people will need to be able to restructure their job tasks every few years in order to keep pace with technological advances.’ (Duffy, Roehler, 1993, p. 5).

The ‘Information Age’ Duffy et al refers to, accelerated massively by technological developments such as personal computers or internet, involves every member of our society, but it is today’s children that are going to experience it in its fullest. The internet itself is such an enormous source of information that preceding generations never experienced before.

All this wealth of information is readily available to anyone provided that they are able to decode the messages that are offered to them; that they are able to decipher what the other party engaged in the information exchange meant – that they are able to read. The vast majority of those vital pieces of information are provided in a written form and only reading them can enable their users to use them to their benefit.

Effective reading does not only ensure basic survival in our society but it can also significantly improve the quality of life of those who master it. Bradshaw et al states that

‘Literary reading strongly correlates to other forms of active civic participation. Literary readers are more likely than non-literary readers to perform volunteer and charity work, visit art museums, attend performing arts events, and attend sporting events.’ (Bradshaw, Nichols, 2004, p. 12)

Strong literacy skills are also imperative to academic success and are essential to children’s education process. Effective reading (and writing) skills are the basis on which effective communication can be reached, it can enable an efficient use of the technological aids available to children and can also enable them to be successful in every area of education.

The Czech Republic is a fairly small country and therefore the need to learn foreign language needs to be accentuated in this country. Children are required to study at least two foreign languages while still in primary school, English being naturally amongst them. Still, most of the population will probably very rarely, if ever, use their language skills in any other way than reading or writing on a regular basis. Textual interaction in English remains the primary use for its Czech users.

These are only some major points that come to mind when thinking about the role of reading in our times. They are some of the reasons why I decided to pursue a reading related topic in this thesis.

More specifically, the area that 'caught my eye' is one which is often underestimated by teachers and students alike; the phase of the reading process when the actual reading has already finished. The question remains – what to do next? What would be the appropriate course of action to take? Would it be suitable if students engaged in writing? Speaking? Listening perhaps? Even more reading? Do the students answer reading comprehension questions? Or should they write a home assignment based on the reading they have just finished? The choice naturally depends on the desired outcome of the post-reading activity. Seeing that perhaps two of the most important goals of language teachers are to increase the level of comprehension of their students and to facilitate the communicative use of language both in and outside the classroom, post-reading activities should actively pursue these two goals. These question cannot, however, be answered that easily. I realized this fact when I started to get more involved in studying the reading process and the teaching of reading. There are many reading related books, but quite a lot of them sums up this phase in a few lines, while they devoted pages to the other phases of the reading process.

These are the reasons why I decided to explore the area of post-reading phase of the reading process in more detail, to try to get some answers to these questions, to overview the possibilities and ways to enhance the reading experience for the students, to increase their reading comprehension level and, hopefully, to make them feel that the reading is more of a creative and active process, rather than a tedious task.

This thesis is about appropriate post-reading activities and how they can raise both effectivity and enjoyment of reading process. An appropriate post-reading is one that concentrates on the meaning rather than on eliciting facts, employing the higher-order of thinking, as defined in the taxonomy of thinking proposed by Benjamin Bloom. Such an activity is also one that uses methodological principles proper for these phases of the reading process, namely: activation of background knowledge during the pre-reading, the use of the contextual and morphological clues and the use of graphics organizers to facilitate the reading comprehension and the use of combined benefits of the aforementioned techniques to promote higher layers of cognitive thinking in the post-reading phase of the reading process.

The benefits of appropriate post-reading activities in the EFL classroom environment depend on the type of post-reading activity and the specific technique employed in the process. As a general statement, however, one can formulate that this thesis aims to prove that the right kinds of post-reading speaking and writing activities can significantly contribute to improving the students' level of reading comprehension if they employ higher levels of cognitive thinking and participation in the EFL classroom. This is a goal that can be achieved, as the thesis attempts to point out, by using the reading activity as a basis for purposeful and meaningful communication, a goal that can be achieved by employing strategies such as Discussion Webs, graphical organizers or written reflections on the reading.

2. Language Teaching and Language Learning

Although this thesis deals with reading related topic, it is essential before focusing on reading as such, to first overview the basics about the language learning. Language is acquired in a process that is called language acquisition. Although a great deal of research has been dedicated to this process, no one knows precisely how the language acquisition works. There are some theories, however, that have proven to affect the language learning process, even though some of them were originally concerned with the process of L1 acquisition.

2.1 Behaviourism and the Audio-lingual Method

Behaviourism as a psychological theory emerged in 1920, when two psychologists, Watson and Raynor, carried out experiments during which they were able to 'imprint' conditioning to a baby. The idea of conditioning is based on a theory that you can teach a subject to do anything if you follow a three-stage process (comprising of stimulus, response and reinforcement phases). The example of this theory in practice would be a rat, for instance, that responds to a light (stimulus) by pressing a button and gets a reward (reinforcement). This type of conditioning is called operant conditioning. It attempts to strengthen (by reinforcement) or weaken (by punishment) non-reflexive behaviour. Russian psychologist Pavlov is famous for the experiments concerning the different type of conditioning which evoked a reflexive response that was originally evoked by a different stimulus (classical conditioning).

In his book, *Verbal Behaviour* (1957), B.F. Skinner applied the theory of operant conditioning to the process of human language learning. He argued that a human baby learns its first language by responding to the same process as the animal in the experiment above. As a result of behaviourism being adapted by language teachers (mainly in America), the audio-lingual method of language teaching was developed. This method relies heavily on the aforementioned three-phase process of stimulus, response and especially reinforcement. It assumes that language is a 'habit' that can be learned by constant drill and repetition. (Harmer, 1991, p. 31-32)

2.2 Cognitivism

Another psychological theory that has had a major effect on the language teaching and learning process was cognitivism. The term emerged soon after Skinner's work *Verbal*

Behaviour, when Noam Chomsky published his work Review of “Verbal Behaviour” (1959), which very strongly opposed to previous Skinner’s work.

Chomsky argued that the ideas of behaviourism must be flawed, because children are perfectly capable of saying things that they never said before. Therefore, it cannot be the result of conditioning. According to Chomsky, language is not a form of behaviour, but rather a system of rules, and language learning is essentially the process of learning those rules. In a language, there are a finite number of grammatical rules that, if properly applied enable the user of a language to produce an infinite number of sentences. It is this system of rules that children acquire, and while they are using it competently, they are able to use the language in a creative way, experimenting and saying things they have never said before (Harmer, 1991, p. 32 – 33). Chomsky’s work is based on a linguistic theory called Universal Grammar. The Universal Grammar is a theory claiming that all language share the same set of rules, thought to be innate to humans. Chomsky was one of the linguists that pioneered linguistic work in the area of language acquisition and is considered to be one of the major figures of linguistic in the 20th century. Despite their differences, both behaviourism and cognitivism are very important psychological theories that significantly influenced language learning. Essentially, behaviourism stresses the changes in behaviour in the language acquisition whereas cognitivism stresses the role of mind in information processing (Chastain, 1988).

2.3 Krashen’s Theory of Language Acquisition and the Task Based Learning

There is a distinction drawn between the process when the first language is learnt, usually at an early age, which is called the primary language acquisition, and the additional languages a person can learn, called the secondary language acquisition. It should be also noted that today, some scholars use the terms language acquisition and language learning quite interchangeably, but according to (most notably) Krashen (1984), a distinction should be made between the natural process of language acquisition (for example a child’s L1 acquisition, or L2 acquisition in an out of class situation) and formal language learning.

Krashen maintains that the former is a subconscious process which results in the knowledge of a language whereas the latter results only in 'knowing about' language; he also states that with the right type of training students can actually acquire a second language in academic settings.

Krashen closely relates successful language acquisition to the kind of language input the students receive. He contrasts two kinds of language input – roughly-tuned and finely-tuned input. Roughly-tuned language input should be slightly above the level the students are using, but not above the level they are capable of understanding. Finely-tuned language input is precisely at the level the students are using. The concept that Krashen stresses is that rough language input is the one that children normally receive from the time they start to acquire L1. Their parents tend to simplify the language they use to communicate with them, so that the children can at least mostly understand it. A similar situation can occur when a native speaker tries to communicate with a non-native speaker. The native speaker tends to simplify the language in order to enable the non-native speaker to understand. Krashen maintains that a constant supply of roughly-tuned language input will cause language students to acquire previously unknown items of a language without making any conscious effort. However, the roughly-tuned input must be comprehensible in order to enable this process to work properly.

Roughly-tuned language input is contrasted to finely-tuned language input which students receive when they are consciously learning. According to Krashen, such language is not acquired and can only be used to monitor what someone is going to say. In other words, whereas language which is acquired is part of the language store we use when we want to communicate, the only use for consciously learned language is to check that acquired knowledge just as we are about to use it. Consciously learned language, in other words, is only available in highly restricted circumstances, as a monitor. Learning does not directly help acquisition (Harmer, 1991, p. 34).

While Krashen's theories certainly have some valid points, there are some questions that these theories do not seem to answer. Many experts have been critical of Krashen's rather

strict distinction between language learning and language acquisition. M Sharwood-Smith (1981) and K. Gregg (1984) are only some of them. Is it really possible to separate acquired and learnt language in a way Krashen suggests? And how is it possible to precisely determine what was learnt and what was acquired? These theories seem to be very hard to prove. Is it really not possible that one could learn the language on such a level that it would become equal to acquired knowledge? Although much research has been devoted to these problems, these are only a few of the questions that remain yet to be answered.

The practical application of the theory mentioned above in teaching English as a second language is the task-based learning method. Many experts felt that language should be acquired by the means of some kind of deeper experience, rather than by de-contextualised practice. This approach was first used by Allwright in 1977, and it was popularised while being used by N. S. Prabhu since 1979 in Bangalore, India. He theorised that if one puts the emphasis on meaning rather than traditional methodology syllabus, the language would be learnt incidentally. A task-based learning lesson starts with the pre-task phase (introduction to the topic and task), then the task cycle itself (task, planning and report).

2.4 Humanistic Approaches: Suggestopaedia, the Silent Way and Total Physical Response

Another approach that has emerged as a reaction to the aforementioned theories is that students' language development corresponds to the development of their personalities. In other words, students need to be taught to develop their personalities, to develop their self-concept and feel positively about themselves, thus enabling them to develop further as well in the linguistic area. A number of methodological approaches used this perspective as a basis for language teaching. Among the most notable are Suggestopaedia by Lozanov, the Silent Way by Gattegno and the Total Physical Response method by Asher.

Suggestopaedia (developed by Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozanov) stresses that the students must be comfortable and relaxed in their learning environment. This can be achieved by comfortable furniture, pictures, colours and relaxing music. The typical lesson using this method would be structured in four basic phases. The first phase, the Presentation, helps the students to relax and set their minds on a task at hand. Second, there is the Active Concert phase, during which the material to be covered is presented to the students. Next, there is the Passive Review phase when the students are invited to relax and listen to music while the text is being read in the background. The last phase is the Practice, during which a number of puzzles, games, songs and other activities are being used to consolidate learning. According to this methodology, the general ease of mind and lowering the affective filter increases the learning rate by as much as three times compared to conventional teaching methods (Harmer, 1991, p. 36).

The Silent Way is notable for the fact that the teacher gives extremely limited language input to the students, modelling the language to be learned only once and then indicating and guiding the students by gestures, miming and other non-verbal means. The teacher does not correct the students or praise them, but rather indicates that they should try again until the students' effort is successful. This method aims to create independent and experimental learners. (Harmer, 1991, p. 36).

The Total Physical Response is a method in which James Asher sought a way to reduce the amount of stress that language learning causes amongst students. This method is based on the observation that children pass through a silent period before they begin to speak, and that about 50% of adults' utterances to children are commands. Taking advantage of this, Asher theorised that children can determine meaning by comprehending cause-and-effect relationships, by seeing the changes that take place in their physical environment as a result of the language being used (Chastain, 1988, p. 96). When using the TPR method, the teacher gives the instructions and the students carry them out. The instructions, or commands, usually deal with some kind of physical action taken by students. Commands such as "Touch your nose with your left hand!" or "Jump on one leg three times!" can be used. When they

grasped the meaning of the instructions, they can start to give them themselves. This method intends the students to learn the language through action – physical response.

The topic of language teaching, learning and acquisition would certainly deserve much more attention, but the present text can not hope to do much more than to touch on the topic briefly. This thesis focuses on a reading related topic; therefore, I feel that the importance of reading and other three language skills should be given more attention, even though the scope of this work does not allow for full coverage such an important topic would deserve.

3. The Importance of Reading for Academic Success

As mentioned above, reading is one of the most crucial skills enabling children to achieve academic success in school. Despite all the efforts to the contrary, most of the information that children are supposed to absorb, remember and finally use in real life is still text based; a fact of life that is not likely to change, or at least not in the near future. Recent studies show that more than two thirds of all instruction is structured or guided by textbooks (Strong et al, 2002, p. 2). Reading is therefore essential for a child to be able to access the information that they need in order to be successful in their academic pursuits. Several renowned experts have claimed and proved the link between effective reading and academic success.

The National Research Council has determined that the academic success of a student, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing a student's reading skill at the end of third grade. A student who is not at least a modestly skilled reader at the end of third grade is unlikely to graduate from high school. Another well known persona in the TEFL world who commented on the important link between reading and academic achievement was Allington who maintains that

The research has well demonstrated the need for students to have instructional texts that they can read accurately, fluently, and with good comprehension if we hope to foster academic achievement. (Allington, 2006)

In addition to providing a means of access to all school subjects, the ability to read promotes a system of thought. (Donaldson, 1989, cited in Riley, 1996, p. 6) Effective reading requires logical and clear thinking. Reading is about deciphering the message the author meant to communicate, analyze and interpret it correctly. A logical and analytical way of thinking that enables this process is obviously very helpful in achieving success both in language and any other classes.

Chastain (1988) states that at least three reasons why reading is important can be distinguished. They are the relationship of reading and other language skills, the possible uses of reading in the EFL classroom and finally the importance of reading as a communication skill. In Chastain's opinion, there is a strong link between reading and other language skills. A typical English class should use all four language skills combined to produce the desired result.

The most obvious connection can be established between reading, speaking and writing. Reading aloud can be used to provide much needed speaking practice; writing and reading skills are so closely connected that one cannot exist and evolve without the other. According to Chastain (1988), practice in reading aloud is a preliminary step to both reading and writing. Before students can do either very well, the connection between sound and its written symbol(s) needs to be firmly established. Without this knowledge, students are not likely to be successful in the typical language class in which all four language skills are stressed (p. 218). This sound – symbol relationship is essential in developing all of these language skills.

Another very important role of reading lies in providing a language model that is different from the one provided by the teacher. Having a variety of language input can

enhance the language proficiency of the students and reading is a very good source for this kind of input. Unlike in their first language, students often lack appropriate and sufficient sources of language in our environment, and reading can help to alleviate the problem considerably. One more way how reading interacts with other language skills is that reading involves mental processes very similar to those that the other three language skills also require. (Chastain, 1988, p. 218) This means that as one particular language skill improves, it starts to positively influence the other language skills. If reading skill of a student improves, we can safely assume that some knowledge gained with this skill will be transferred to the other three language skills. However, the exact mode of transfer and the amount of knowledge that can be transferred in this way still has not been precisely determined.

There are several very interesting issues that need to be considered to appreciate the effect and the possible uses of reading in the EFL classroom. One of the greatest things about reading is that it can be used to lessen the stress factor involved in learning. It is up to students to choose the speed they read and possibly to reread the difficult passages they have trouble understanding. This is, as Chastain (1988) states, a very important psychological, emotional, and cognitive variable in learning a complicated new skill (p. 219).

Another stress reduction related matter is that students can read in privacy, not afraid that the mistakes they are likely (considering that only an ideal reading process is one hundred percent effective in reconstructing the original message the author intended to communicate) to make will be made in public. While some of the students may not look that way, academic success, and therefore successful reading is quite an important part of their life, and substantial part of their social self-confidence. While they read the required text in privacy, the stress factor diminishes considerably, thus lessening the fear of making a mistake. This can help to increase the chances of successful reading for those students who are hesitant or ashamed when asked to perform in front of their classmates.

Reading can indeed be used very well as a basis for many other language and communicative activities to further enhance the students' grasp of the English language. Whenever one uses it as a basis for writing, speaking or any other language skill, it can

provide a valuable source of ideas that will enable students to engage in more communicative activities. With appropriate reading materials, English classes can be improved considerably, for example authentic reading materials can provide students with real life language that can be missing or lacking in both quality and quantity in the classroom.

Many of these activities can be easily transformed into homework assignments that provide students with more time spent actively engaged in using English. Unfortunately, many teachers are deterred by the amount of time that reading activities often require and concentrate on using reading assignments for homework practice. Chastain (1988) stresses that the teacher needs to think of reading as a means of expanding the amount of time students spend engaged in communication (p. 219). If used properly, reading assignments can considerably contribute to students' level of English.

While some view reading as a passive process, this cannot be farther from the truth. Reading by definition requires active engagement in the process of deciphering the message the author is trying to communicate. This includes actively using deduction and logic in order to decode the message. By reading the reader engages in communication with the author. Reading must therefore be viewed as a communication skill, and a quite widely used communication skill at that. In fact, students are more likely to use this skill than any of the other three language skills in our environment. Chastain (1988) points out that reading is the skill in which students will have the greatest ability at the end of a course stressing the four language skills. They will also retain it longer than other skills. Reading can be an important basis for individual learning about the country and its people. Finally, reading is the skill that students will in all likelihood have the most opportunities to use and one they can use most conveniently (p. 219).

4. The Reading Process

The previous part of this thesis used the term reading, so it should be defined what reading actually is. When you look the word up in dictionaries, there are many

definitions. However, most of them correspond in several points. Many of them use the word 'process' while defining reading to imply that reading is an activity that requires the reader to use a system to decode the message communicated by the text. Encarta® World English Dictionary, North American Edition defines reading as the identifying of written or printed words: the process of identifying and understanding the meaning of the characters and words in written or printed material. Another dictionary, Compact Oxford English Dictionary, defines the term process as a series of actions or steps towards achieving a particular end.

While the dictionary definitions are certainly interesting, there are surely better definitions of reading, particularly concerning language teaching. One must note, however, that the converging point of most of the definitions of reading is that reading requires an active use of a written system of symbols to decode the message. Many definitions that come from the authors who wrote books on the subject stress this fact even more:

“Reading is an active process in which readers interact with text to reconstruct the message of the author. Research in recent years emphasizes the extent to which reading depends on the background knowledge of readers. Printed symbols are signs which lead an active mind to reflect on alternatives during the process of constructing knowledge.” (Barr, Sadow, and Blachowicz 1990)

Chastain (1988) even uses the word 'interactive' in his statement that the reading process implies an active cognitive system operating on a printed material to arrive at an understanding of the message (p. 222).

“...the goal of reading is constructing meaning in response to text...It requires interactive use of graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning.” (Goodman, 1981)

Concerning the last definition above one could note that reading could be more accurately described as recreation of meaning, rather than creation. The writer created the meaning while writing the text. The reader intends to recreate that meaning based on his language and background knowledge. While not all the definitions of reading stress that reading is an active process, many of them do. For reading to be truly effective, reading must be approached as an active skill and taught in that manner as well.

4.1 The Phases of the Reading Process - Pre-reading Phase

As I can still painfully remember from the time I spent as a primary school student, quite often reading in my English classes was introduced by words like 'We are going to read an article about whales on page sixty-five.' Excruciating boredom settled in the classroom even before we opened our books. The pre-reading phase of the reading activity was simply nonexistent. Considering that many of the authors of books written on the subject stress the utmost importance of the pre-reading phase in the reading process, this was not clearly the correct approach to reading. As the first phase of the reading process, the pre-reading phase is the one when the entire active process of reading begins. It is seen as the time when children's knowledge can be activated to engage them in the reading topic, raise their awareness of the topic and motivate them to do the actual reading. In this, reading is very similar to listening activities. Barnett (1989) comments that pre-reading activities introduce students to a particular text, elicit or provide appropriate background knowledge, and activate necessary schemata. Previewing a text with students should arouse their interest and help them approach the text in a more meaningful and purposeful manner as the discussion compels them to think about the situation or points raised in a text. The prereading phase

helps students define selection criteria for the central theme of a story or the major argument of an essay.

Some of the most prominent pre-reading activities include discussion (about the author of the text or about the text itself), brainstorming ideas about the text, making predictions about the text, establishing a purpose for reading the text and generating questions about the text. There are many more that can be used, such as looking for possibly similar stories children are already familiar with, or judging the text illustrations or cover, skimming or scanning (for structure, main points, and future directions) etc. (Barnett, 1989).

There are various techniques and strategies that help students to read in a more active way and to think critically about the text since the reading process starts, such as anticipation guides, the Frayer Model, the Text structure approach or the PLAN (Predict, Locate, Add, and Note) strategy. Some of these will be further discussed in the methodology part of this thesis. Chastain (1998) notes that prepared students can complete the assignment better with less effort, and they are able to participate more fully and with greater satisfaction. Prepared students rapidly gain confidence in their ability to learn L2, and they tend to be more highly motivated and more enthusiastic than students who struggle to complete their assignment (p. 225).

4.2 The Phases of the Reading Process - While Reading Phase

The while-reading phase takes place during the actual process of reading. The ultimate goal of while-reading strategies is to increase the level of comprehension and reading proficiency by providing the students with necessary tools and strategies to do so. Considering the fact that reading quite often takes place outside the classroom – typically as a homework assignment, it is very important that students are aware of the possible strategies that will enable them to cope with the reading assignment successfully. It is necessary that students are aware of their level of comprehension throughout the reading and that they are

able to use strategies to compensate for any inadequacies in comprehension they feel while reading the assignment.

Hamilton (2002) notes some while-reading strategies such as analyzing context clues (definitions, synonyms, antonyms, examples, restatements etc.), word parts (common prefixes, suffixes, and roots), word groups, semantic webs, structured notes etc. (p. 2 – 36).

Sanacore (1985) also offers some basic guidelines and techniques that students should practice while reading:

- Teach students to generate questions as they read and study expository text.
- Teach students to create story specific questions such as “Is this story more about the officer or the barber?” from schema-general questions such as “Who is the leading character?” while reading a complex narrative text.
- Teach students to monitor and resolve blocks of comprehension.
- Teach students about the structure of textbook chapters, guiding them to use strategies that increase their comprehension and retrieval of information, such as the SQ3R process which consists of survey, question, read, recite, and review.
- Teach students to learn and to recall valuable information by adhering to the text structure.

(p. 50:56 - 58)

There are many more skills and strategies that can be developed to be used in the while-reading phase of the reading process. Barnett (1989) suggests to include strategies such as guessing word meanings by using context clues, word formation clues, or cognate practice; considering syntax and sentence structure by noting the grammatical functions of unknown words, analyzing reference words, and predicting text content; reading for specific pieces of information; and learning to use the dictionary effectively.

While he notes that helping students to employ these strategies can be difficult because individual students employ and need different strategies, he makes it clear that long-term

effects more than outweigh the effort put into learning these strategies and that they can help students improve their control of L2, and decode problematic text passages.

4.3 The Phases of the Reading Process - Post-reading Phase

The ultimate goal of the post-reading phase of the reading process is to first check students' comprehension and most importantly to lead them to a deeper understanding of the text. Real life reading is not about memorizing the facts mentioned in the text but rather about grasping the meaning of the text and being able to interpret and analyze the information that the text is attempting to communicate. According to Barnett (1989), the goal of reading is to see into another mind, or to mesh new information into what one already knows. Second language reading must go beyond detail-eliciting comprehension drills to help students recognize that different strategies are appropriate with different text types.

To stress the idea that grasping the meaning of the text is much more important than facts that are included in the text, Beattie et al (1984) even believes that teachers should avoid fact questions that can be answered directly from the text. They suggest activities such as summarizing the text or paraphrasing the content because these activities require a global recall of relevant information (cited in Chastain, 1989, p. 228).

The goal of the teacher should be to motivate the students to employ these strategies automatically as needed (Cerveny et al, 2003. p. 6). They maintain that while indeed reading strategies help immensely to improve reading competency, it is the use of these strategies without direct guidance of the teacher that makes the difference.

It is imperative to get the students understand that their participation in following activities will require them to fully understand the meaning of the text and therefore not to attempt to skip this phase in anticipation of what comes next. There are several types of activities that can enable students to do the post-reading phase properly, including for example using contextual clues to determine the meaning of unknown words or difficult passages, using troublesome words in a sentence, using the reading piece for a listening

comprehension exercise (oral reading), guessing games and many more (Chastain, 1988, p. 228 – 229).

Stauffer (1980) proposes his WWP approach as a way of ensuring that the teacher's questions require the students to understand the text thoroughly before they can proceed. The WWP approach stands for 'What do you think?' – the teacher asks for an opinion about particular matter, 'Why do you think so?' – at this phase the students are asked about the reasons that led them to their particular opinion, and finally 'Prove it!' phase when the students must provide their evidence that led them to their conclusions.

Ringler and Weber (1984) tried to organize post-reading activities into two basic categories:

- activities that require the student to recall the information from the text or react to the text (typically comprehension questions)
- activities aimed at developing greater communicative fluency in the four language skills (reports, debates, reviews, role-plays, dramatizations, ...)

In other words, during post-reading activities the students should be able to increase the level of their reading comprehension and also to put the reading they have done to use for communication purposes.

4.4 The Phases of the Reading Process According to Phillips

There are different opinions about the best way to organize the reading process into various phases. The division mentioned in the text above is just one of them. Phillips (1984), for instance, recognises five distinctive phases of the reading process:

- Preteaching/Preparation Stages - In this stage the teacher develops anticipation, expectations and purpose for the text the students are about to read

- Skimming/Scanning Stages – Gist reading and reading for specific information occur at this stage.
- Decoding/Intensive Reading Stage – This stage is when the actual reading takes place.
- Comprehension Stage – The stage when the level of reading comprehension of the students is being checked.
- Transferable/Integrating skills – In this final stage of the reading process, the activities used in the previous stage can be extended, or new activities can be introduced, to incorporate the reading activity into the class and extend the possibilities of using the text for additional purposes of developing students' language.

(Phillips, 1984, cited in Hadley, 1993, p. 199 - 200)

4.5 Language Skills That Can Be Developed

Another point of view might be dividing the post-reading activities on the basis of the four language skills they aim to develop as their primary objective. There is a variety of language skills that can be chosen to be developed during post-reading activities. Grellet (1991) suggests that reading should not be separated from the other skills. It would not be logical nor practical that one particular language skill should be taught in separation, since the typical EFL class consists of an integrated use of all four basic language skills. It is therefore important, to link the different skills through the reading activities chosen.

4.5.1 Speaking

Speaking focused activities are perhaps the most natural response to the reading process. It is a natural reaction that one feels the need to share their opinion of the text, comment on the story or characters, or perhaps fantasize about different possible turns in the storyline.

There is a variety of possible post-reading activities that can help to improve students' speaking skills. The most obvious (and the most widely used) method of getting the students to speak is to ask them comprehension questions. As this method is in such wide use, it deserves a brief notice.

4.5.1.1 Comprehension Questions

Comprehension questions are widely used in classroom practice; often the questions are in written form following the text and the students answer them orally. While some experts tend to see the importance and effectivity of traditional comprehension questions as diminishing, if used correctly they can be, in fact, very effective classroom tool.

The National Reading Panel report (2000) suggests seven strategies that had been proven successful in teaching reading and increasing reading comprehension. The third one is 'Answering questions'. While the report was focused on L1 reading, it can still serve as an evidence of the importance of questions that measure the comprehension as a post-reading activity. The effectiveness of comprehension questions depends very much on what strategies the teacher uses when creating them.

The customary classroom approach to fostering students' comprehension of written texts is the read-question-respond model (Alvermann, Swafford, & Montero, 2004; Durkin, 1978/1979). In whole-group formats, teachers typically question students about content after an assigned chapter or passage. Students respond—or at least a few do—and a brief discussion sometimes ensues (Fordham, 2006).

Certainly, asking questions about a reading assignment is not exclusively limited to the post-reading phase of the reading process; this technique can be used throughout the entire reading process without hesitation. It is the way in which the questions are asked that can contribute significantly to an increase of reading comprehension of the reading assignment. The questions can be formed to be open or closed, literal, inferential or applied questions. McKenzie (1997) identified no less than 18 different types of questions, including for example what he called essential, probing, clarification and strategic questions. According to McKenzie, strategic questions:

focus on ways to make meaning...they help us while passing through unfamiliar territory by prompting us to think deliberately: What do I do next? How can I best approach this next step, this next challenge, this next frustration? What thinking tool is most apt to help me here? (cited in Fordham, 2006, p. 2)

Strategic comprehension questions focus more on how to achieve comprehension rather than what needs to be comprehended. In fact, these two areas are so interconnected that one eventually leads to the other.

Comprehension questions, although widely used, are certainly not the only means of verbal response to the text. Students can be asked to summarize or retell the story, to retell the story in a different way or from a different perspective. Some of the more interesting speaking related post-reading activities include for example:

- Dramatic monologue
- Fishbowl – 2-4 students sit in a circle and talk about the text, the rest of the students observe and make comments, then they switch roles
- Host a talk show about the text
- Author interview

- Discussion
- Roundtable – provide the students with a possibility to talk about what bothered, interested or confused them in a book
- Interrogation – one student pretends to be a character in the story, the rest questions him/her
- Story telling

4.6 Writing

Writing as a post-reading activity is used very often, particularly as a form of home assignment. As noted above, no language skill should be taught in isolation. Both being considered the cornerstones of basic literacy, writing is the language skill that is in particularly close relationship to reading. In a way these two skills complement each other and match together as closely as possible. Obviously, one cannot exist without the other. Therefore, the teacher should not only respect this fact, but try to take advantage of it.

Effective teachers look for ways to integrate reading and writing as often as possible because they know that each process reinforces the other and can lead to improved comprehension and retention of subject area content (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991).

Compared to the speaking post-reading activities mentioned above, writing activities, while it is sometimes considered less spontaneous and perhaps less fun, have one undeniable advantage. Writing leaves a persistent record of one's thoughts, it can be easily organized to represent the changes in thinking that might have taken place during the reading process, and can serve as an evidence of this development. Wells (1993) states that by writing while reading, students could learn to organize their thoughts. After habitually writing in response to reading, they could learn to clarify and refine their thoughts (Brookes, 1988).

Many teachers are rather reluctant to use writing in their classes as it can be very time consuming. While this might be true, the benefits of using written response to reading can easily compensate for this drawback. There are many possible post-reading writing activities apart from commonly used essays and reviews. Amongst some of the most notable possibilities for post-reading writing activity are:

- Business Card Book – write a story on a business card paper format
- Haiku – create a haiku about one of the characters
- Dear Author – after reading a book students write to the author
- Downgrade – adapt myths or other stories for a younger audience
- What if – how the story would be different if something changed in the story
- 13 views – inspired by Stevens’s poem “13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird”, each stanza offers a different view of a character or chapter
- Time Machine – a character from the text travels from the book into today
- Call for Censorship – list reasons why the book should or shouldn’t be allowed

4.7 Listening

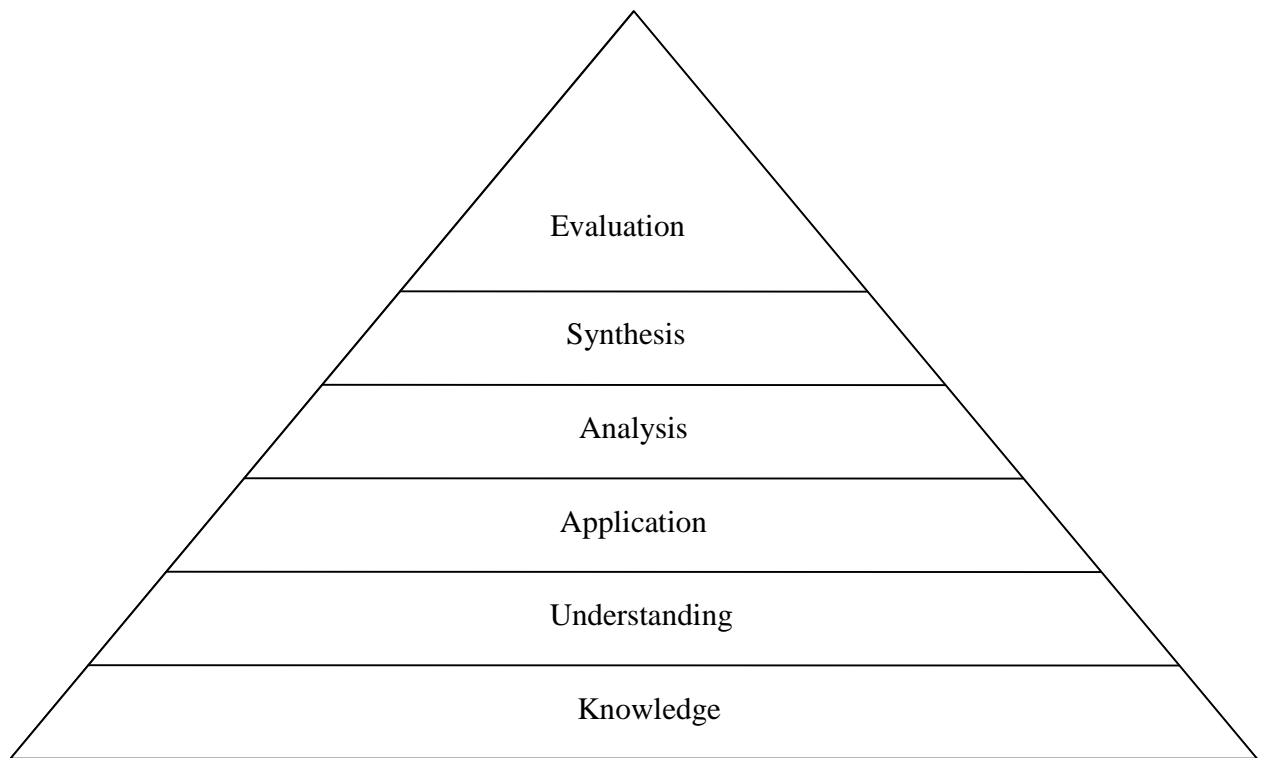
Listening is hardly ever used as a post-reading activity. The possibilities of listening as a post-reading activity are without doubt quite limited. While reading is commonly used as a post-listening activity, the reversed situation simply does not provide many benefits. Although the effectiveness of post-reading listening activities is difficult to be determined, one can use it to provide an appropriate pronunciation model for the students, thus enabling them to link the sounds and written symbols. Another variant of this type of activity is reading aloud. The teacher or one of the students can read the particularly difficult parts of the text aloud, so as to provide the pronunciation model and by clear intonation and tone of their voice help the other students to better comprehend the text. Other possible post-reading

listening related activities include comparing an article and a news-bulletin, using recorded information to solve a written problem or matching opinions and texts. (Grellet, 1991, p. 8).

5. Bloom's taxonomy

In the text above, the difference between various possible responses in terms of cognitive thinking was noted. This kind of division of levels of intellectual behaviour was pioneered by Benjamin Bloom in 1956. Bloom and his colleagues divided learning behaviours into three interrelated domains – cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude) and psychomotor (skills). They discovered six distinctive 'layers' of cognitive thinking ranging from a less complex knowledge of facts and a comprehension of these facts, to an increasingly complex application and analysis, followed by synthesis and finally evaluation. Bloom's taxonomy can help teachers in creating and revising their learning objectives to promote students' creative and critical thinking.

Bloom's taxonomy (cognitive domain):



(Figure 1)

Bloom also provided verb examples that can be used to represent the intellectual activities on each level of cognitive thinking listed above:

Knowledge:	arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, and reproduce state.
Understanding:	classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognize, report, restate, review, select, and translate.
Application:	apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
Analysis:	analyze, appraise, calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, and test.

Synthesis:	arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, propose, set up, and write.
Evaluation:	appraise, argue, assess, attach, choose, compare, defend estimate, judge, predict, rate, core, select, support, value, evaluate.
(Bloom et al, 1956)	

According to Bloom's original research, the majority (about 90%) of teachers' questions at that time were based on the lowest level of cognitive thinking – knowledge. This taxonomy can be used when planning lessons to employ a higher-order of thinking by the students, to facilitate students' use of all levels of the cognitive process and thus to make the learning objectives more interesting and perhaps also more demanding. Celce-Murcia (1991) comments that it is thought that these levels demand increasingly greater cognitive control as one moves from knowledge to evaluation. It may be that effective operation at more advanced levels, such as synthesis and evaluation, would call for a more advanced control of the second language (p. 489). However demanding this might be for both teacher and students, the benefits of using Bloom's taxonomy while setting one's learning objectives more than outweigh possible problems. Moreover, these problems can be overcome by the use of proper pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading strategies.

6. Typical features of Appropriate Post-reading Activities

It should be noted that regardless of the language skill they focus on, appropriate reading activities share some common concepts and ideals. The post-reading activity that shares these concepts and ideals can be expected to significantly contribute to increasing reading comprehension in the EFL classroom. Grellet (1991) suggests several notable properties which are characteristic of appropriate post-reading activities.

One should introduce exercises in which there is no single straightforward answer. Extending the range of these exercises will lead to greater discussion and reflection on the text.

- Exercises must be meaningful and correspond as often as possible to what one is expected to do with the text. (Communicative function)
- Activities should be flexible and varied and they should be suited to the texts and to one's reasons for reading them.
- There must be variety in the range of exercises. This is an important factor in motivation and it is necessary if different skills are to be covered.

(Grellet, 1991, p. 9 - 10)

While using the post-reading activities, perhaps the greatest emphasis must be put on the requirement of using higher-order thinking, in other words, using the upper layers of learning behaviour according to Bloom's taxonomy. Appropriate post-reading activities not only foster reading comprehension, but also help to promote creative and critical thinking beyond the level of mere understanding the information in the text. Several possible methods to achieve this effect will be mentioned in the following text.

B. Methodology

1. Basic Methodological Principles for Reading Activities

It is essential that basic methodological principles for teaching reading be established before it is possible to examine the methodology of the post-reading part of the reading process in detail. While many experts in the field divide the reading process into three phases and the methodology regarding the reading process is divided accordingly, this is not always the case (see part A.4.4 of this thesis). In the following text the three-part division of the reading process (pre-reading, while-reading, post-reading) is going to be used.

1.1. Pre-reading Phase Methodological Principles

In their daily lives, students read a number of texts for information or for pleasure (either in L1 or L2) and if the teacher's efforts in teaching reading are meant to be successful, they must reflect this experience. In real-life reading, the reader has some purpose to read the text. There are some anticipations that the reader expects to be fulfilled. By creating similar conditions in the pre-reading phase of the reading process, the teacher can vastly increase the chances of teaching a successful reading activity.

Therefore, the primary goal for the pre-reading stage of the reading process is to establish clear purpose for reading, to motivate the students to create some positive anticipations about the text they are going to read, and finally (in contrast to the real-life reading) the teacher should attempt to facilitate the upcoming reading by using some of the strategies and activities mentioned further on.

The first step in establishing the purpose of reading, anticipations about the text and to prepare the students for reading is usually called 'the activation of background knowledge'. This might include the teacher showing some pictures to the students to stimulate discussion about the topic, asking questions to build up students' anticipation about the topic/text etc.

In this phase of the reading process the teacher must attempt to predict the difficult vocabulary and/or grammar that the students are going to encounter while reading the text and deal with these problematic areas, ideally before the students actually have problems with them and before these can lower the students' motivation level. Even though it is not likely that the teacher would be completely successful in this effort, it can still considerably lower the stress related to the reading process. Since reading is often considered difficult and stressful by students and teachers alike, it is of utmost importance that the teacher should succeed in this effort. Nothing will demoralize the students more than a text that they have difficulties understanding, or they do not understand at all. Some of the activities Phillips (1984, cited in Hedley, 1996) recommends at this stage of the reading process include

- brainstorming (to generate ideas that have a high probability of occurrence in the text)
- looking at the visuals, headlines, titles, charts or any other contextual clues that are provided with the text
- predicting/hypothesizing on the basis of the title or first line of a text, what significance it might have or what might come next (p. 200).

Another form of help with the text is provided by skimming/scanning techniques that can be utilised before the actual intensive reading takes place. These techniques provide us with a number of possible applications in the pre-reading phase of the reading process. Possible activities might include gist reading, identifying the topic, or main idea of the text, selecting the best paraphrase from multiple options of the main idea, matching paragraphs with subheadings, filling in charts or forms with key concepts, creating headings and subheadings for paragraphs or sections of the text or making global judgements or reacting to a reading passage (Phillips 1984, cited in Hedley, 1996, p. 200).

In order to use these techniques effectively, students must be already familiar and comfortable with their usage; in fact it is best if they use them without requiring direct

instructions from their teacher. Using these strategies will help the students to cope with the language that is slightly above the level they are able to produce at the time (see roughly-tuned input, section A.2.3 of this thesis).

1.2 While-reading Phase Methodological Principles

In this phase of the reading process the students move on to an actual intensive reading of the text. In order to make this phase of the reading process less demanding, there are various strategies and techniques that will help the students increase their level of reading comprehension. First, the chances of successful reading should be already increased by the activities completed in the pre-reading phase of the reading process. During the pre-reading phase, the students have been introduced to the topic of the text, they have generated some ideas about the text, and they have made predictions and expectations. In the while-reading phase of the reading process, they are able to see whether their predictions have been accurate and they are able to confirm or reject them. If their predictions have been correct, they will have a much easier task ahead of them. If, while reading the text, they realize that their predictions were incorrect or incomplete, they must alter them to match the new information they decode while reading. In an extreme case, the students might be even forced to reject their original predictions completely and form new ones. The students should also be aware of their level of reading comprehension while reading. If they feel that their level of comprehension is lower than the level necessary to successfully complete the reading assignment, they must employ strategies to increase their level of comprehension.

Sanacore (1985) suggests some techniques that the students should employ at all times during the while-reading phase of the reading process to prevent inadequate comprehension level (see part A.4.2 of this thesis). While not all of the students benefit equally from these strategies, they can be helpful in increasing the overall level of reading comprehension.

1.3 Post-reading Phase Methodological Principles

The post-reading phase of the reading process is the phase when the 'final pieces of the puzzle click in the place'. It is the time when all the strategies, techniques and work dedicated to this point to the goal of increasing the level of students' reading comprehension should come to fruition. At this phase, some of the previously mentioned strategies should be completed and some, such as K-W-L charts or the SQ3R strategy, should be ready to complete. The first of the goals of the post-reading phase is to clarify the information from the text that the students had difficulties with, or fail to grasp completely. Because perfect reading where the reader is able to decipher the author's message completely and without any omissions or mistakes is simply an unattainable ideal, this role of the post-reading phase must not be underestimated. It is essential that all of the students reach at least basic comprehension of the text they have just read, otherwise it is very difficult, if not impossible, to carry on with the reading assignment to other types of post-reading activities.

1.3.1 Helping Unsuccessful Readers

A good teacher must be able to assess the level of reading comprehension of their students in the post-reading phase of the reading process. As noted above, perfect reading is simply something that cannot be attained in the real world. It is crucial to the success of reading that the teacher is able to identify the level of reading comprehension in the class and determine the number of struggling students that have not reached desired or at least passable reading comprehension. If there are many struggling students whose level of comprehension does not allow them to successfully participate in the post-reading activities, perhaps the difficulty level of the text was beyond the linguistic capabilities of the students. The problem might also be insufficient preparation during pre-reading and while-reading phases of the reading process, or insufficient use of the strategies mentioned in parts A.4 of

this thesis, such as using context clues, predicting etc. Hosenfeld (1977) carried out a research that attempted to determine the relationship between the level of successful second language reading and the use of certain strategies. Amongst other findings, this study claims that successful readers kept the meaning of the passage in mind while reading, read in broad phrases, skipped inconsequential or less important words, and had a positive self-concept as a reader. On the other hand, the unsuccessful reader lost the meaning of the sentences when decoded, read in short phrases, pondered over inconsequential words, seldom skipped words as unimportant, and had a negative self-concept.

Hosenfeld et al (1981) identify a total of twenty strategies that are used by successful readers. This type of readers

- reads for meaning
- skips unknown words or guesses based on the context
- uses the context of prior and subsequent material
- identifies the grammatical structures
- evaluates the validity of the guesses
- makes predictions based on the title
- continues to read
- recognizes cognates
- makes interpretations based on his knowledge of the world
- analyzes unknown words
- reads expecting the materials to be meaningful
- reads for meaning rather than language
- is willing to guess
- uses illustrations
- makes use of glosses
- looks up the meaning of words only as a last resort
- gets the correct meaning when looking up the words
- skips unimportant words

- follows through on predictions
- utilizes context clues

These strategies, if applied correctly and constantly, enable the students and the teacher to work together in effort to remedy or at least minimize the problems that might emerge as a result of insufficient reading comprehension.

1.4 Strategies for improving reading comprehension

There is a variety of possible strategies to use to enhance and improve reading comprehension. Some of these strategies are used in the pre-reading phase of the reading process, some of them during the while-reading phase and some of them during the post-reading phase. Many of these strategies are intended to be used throughout the entire reading process in order to maximize their effect and force the students to read strategically.

1.4.1 The Directed Reading – Thinking Activity

The Directed Reading – Thinking Activity focuses on open-ended questions that raise the level of comprehension. This strategy includes the essential steps of discussing prior knowledge, predicting, reading, and discussing what was learned. There are many ways to follow up a DR-TA. Haggard (1985), cited in Alderman and Phelps (1994) suggests a group mapping activity and student selection of important vocabulary. (p. 129)

A typical Direct Reading – Thinking Activity consists of three repeating steps.

In the pre-reading phase of the reading process, the teacher asks the students to skim through the text, notice headings and subheadings, pictures, captions etc. and try to form predictions about the text. Most importantly, the teacher asks the students why they made such predictions.

During the while-reading phase, the students are asked to read the text only to the chosen 'breaking point' which should be marking the end of one of the logical parts of the text. At that point the students are challenged to evaluate their predictions, and if necessary to redraft them. It is important to get the students who choose to change their predictions to clarify why.

The process is repeated until the entire text has been covered. After the reading is completed, the predictions are evaluated again and the students are asked if their predictions have been confirmed or if they must have been altered. The purpose of this strategy is to force students to think about the predictions they are going to make about the text and carefully select the way how they make predictions.

1.4.2 K-W-L charts

K-W-L is a pre-reading technique suggested by Ogle (1986). Students first identify what they know about a topic, decide what they want to find out about it, and finally discuss what they have learned. (Alvermann, Phelps, 1994, p. 130)

A K-W-L chart is a very effective classroom technique that focuses on setting the purpose of the reading activity and the predictions that the students make about their reading. All that the students need is a piece of paper and a pencil. First, the teacher draws the chart on the blackboard and the students create their own K-W-L charts on the piece of paper. After the topic of the particular reading activity is introduced (by title only), the students fill in the K column, writing everything that they already know about the given topic. This can be done individually or as a group effort, while the teacher writes down students' ideas on the blackboard chart. The students then complete the W column, writing down everything that they want to learn about the given topic. After the K and W columns are filled, the students read the text and fill in the L column of the chart, listing everything they have learned about the topic, especially in relation to the previously filled W column. Were their questions answered? Why? Why not? Most likely not all the questions in the W

column have been answered, or perhaps some new questions emerged during the discussion. Students can try to answer the questions together or they can be assigned to find the answers to their questions as a home assignment.

Sample K-W-L chart:

K What I know?	W What do I want to know?	L What I have learned?
The Pacific Rim region is prone to earthquakes.	What was the magnitude of the Kobe earthquake?	The Kobe earthquake had a magnitude of 7.2
Earthquakes occur when plates collide.	How many people were injured/killed/homeless?	Over 5,000 were killed, 26,000 injured, 310,000 homeless.
Tsunamis can result from earthquakes.	Was this a big earthquake in comparison to other recent earthquakes in Japan?	140,000 people were killed in the September 1, 1923 Tokyo earthquake.
Earthquakes are measured on a seismic scale of magnitude called the Richter Scale.	Did any tsunamis result from this earthquake?	In the last 25 years, the worst earthquake was the 1988 NW Armenia earthquake with 55,000 deaths, while the largest on the Richter scale was the 1976 Tangshan, China, one of magnitude of 8.2.

	Are the Japanese prepared for earthquakes?	The Northridge earthquake killed only 61 people.
	How does the force of an earthquake compare to something else?	The earthquake had the force of more than 240 kilotons of TNT.

(Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, Language Arts Framework, 2007)

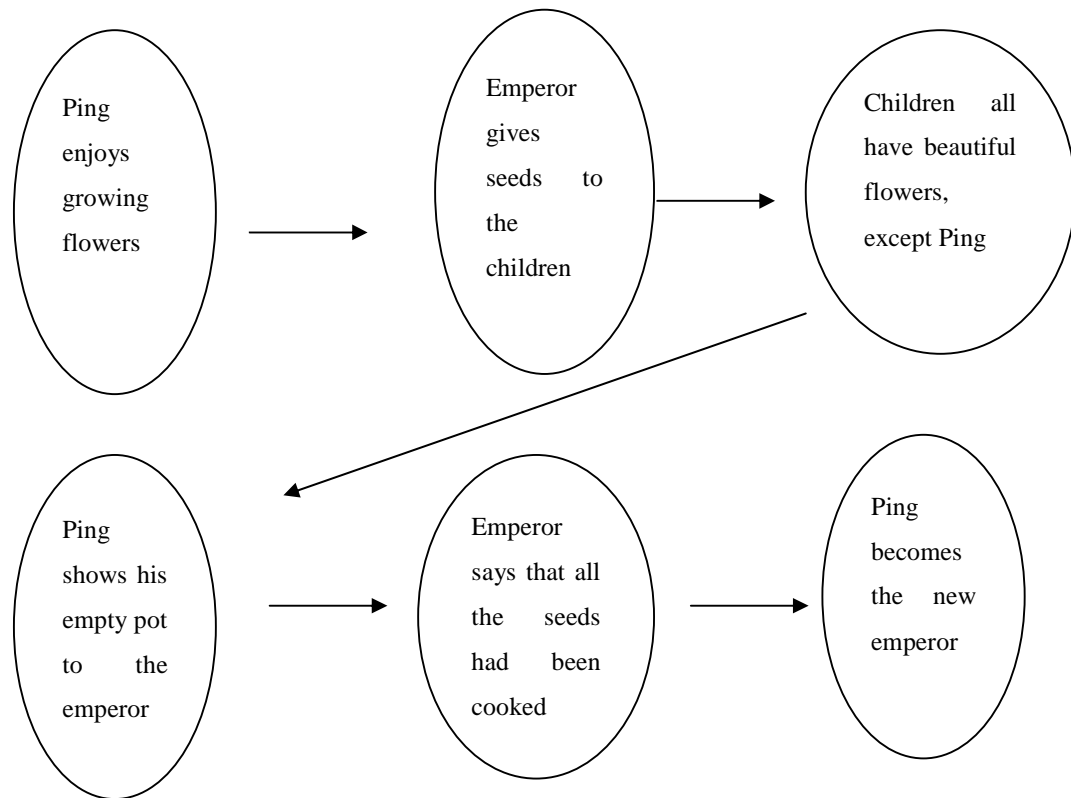
1.4.3 Flow charts

Flow charts are another form of graphic organizers (similar to K-W-L charts) that help the students to arrange their thoughts and provide yet another way to organize the information provided in the text into a more meaningful and well-ordered way.

Flow charts can be used while or after the reading when the students fill in the most important events that happened in the text (in words or drawing). After the flow charts are completed, the group can discuss what the most important points of the story are and why the particular point should be included in the flow chart. Flow charts can be then used for example as a guideline for the students to retell the story.

Sample flow chart:

Title:



(Demi, 1990)

(Figure 2)

2. Response and Reflecting on Reading

Reflecting on reading is an important process that intends to increase the students' level of awareness of their reading and learning experience. It is also one of the most common types of post-reading activities. Reflection can take either individual or collective form; it can

be used in written, oral or even non-verbal form. Even though there are various forms of reading reflection used in classroom practice, they all share some common aims.

Most of these activities are designed to promote students' interest in what they have learned. Students, while reflecting on reading, are encouraged to use their background knowledge and combine it with the information they have learned from the text to reach a new level of comprehension and understanding of the text. The logical path to take after this is to use students' achievements so far for communication. Properly employed, the reading reflection can serve as a valuable tool for the integration of language skills and a motivation for seeing a realistic purpose for reading assignments (see Bloom's taxonomy of learning, part A.5 of this thesis).

2.1 Using Oral activities as a Reflection

Discussion is one of the frequently used types of reflection activities. It allows the teacher to build interest and motivation by having students reflect on their prior knowledge and beliefs and anticipate the new ideas they may get from reading. (Alvermann, Phelps, 1994, p. 187). Discussion uses the natural tendency to talk about one's experience, in this case about the text. Emotions elicited by reading, for instance, can be communicated orally in an easier way than through other forms of communication. The speaker can use intonation, stress and pitch to convey the emotional side of the message he or she is trying to communicate. Students can indicate whether the subject of discussion is interesting to them, or, on the contrary, if the subject seems boring to them. Also, immediate feedback can be provided at any point of the discussion by other participants so that the speaker can see if the message is getting across. This fact further intensifies the feeling of real communication taking place in the classroom.

Another useful characteristic of spoken discourse in the post-reading discussion is that at any point of the discussion the ideas and opinions can be rephrased, modified or completely abandoned to suit the development of the discussion. This would be most likely

the result of the feedback that students would receive from other participants in the discussion. The fact that their opinion could be influenced by other participants and their own opinions to accommodate some changes challenges the students to think about their conclusions. This should motivate students to try to convey their own message as clear as possible to avoid being misunderstood and to prove their point in the discussion.

Even though discussion can be used very effectively in the EFL classroom practice, several problems can occur that would prevent it to be used to its full benefits. In monolingual classes such as ones in Czech schools, special attention must be paid to ensure that students use L2 for communication. Failure to do so would seriously disrupt the effects of using L2 for genuine communication, such as the motivation of students to use L2 or to be interested in learning. The use of L2 should be, therefore, encouraged at all times during the discussion.

Teachers should note that since discussion is a spontaneous, real-life communication activity, it is inevitable that students are going to make some mistakes. The emphasis should be definitely on fluency, provided that language deficiencies do not prevent successful communication. Harmer (1990) comments on this issue:

Native speakers constantly make 'mistakes' when they are speaking. They hesitate and say the same thing in different ways and they often change the subject of what they are saying in mid-sentence. (...) Except in extremely formal situations this is considered normal and acceptable behaviour. (p. 53)

Another problem that teachers frequently encounter when using discussion in the EFL classroom is to get all the students participate. Usually, only a few of the students feel secure enough to speak in front of their classmates, others might be hesitant in front of a larger audience, or may feel unprepared for the task. At this stage of the reading assignment, the information should be already known from the pre-reading and while-reading phases. One

cannot expect the students to be willing to participate in the discussion if they do not think they have something relevant to say. There are also various techniques to encourage the students to take an active role in the discussion and some of them will be covered later on.

2.1.1 Discussion webs

One of the techniques that can be used to counter the students' feeling of 'not having anything to say' is the usage of discussion webs. The discussion web is a kind of graphic organizer that helps the students to discover more points of view on the reading topic and to engage them all actively in the discussion. The Discussion Web technique is loosely based on the Web Outline developed by James Duthie. Donna E. Alvermann is one of the most notable advocates of using discussion webs in the classroom. She promotes this technique as an effective way to incorporate the four language skills and to promote critical thinking among the students. She notes that in what normally passes for discussion in EFL classes, a few highly verbal students tend to usurp most of the talking time while the rest of the class does not participate in the discussion. The discussion web approach aims to remedy this situation. It is used to encourage discussion and reflection (Alvermann, 1992).

This technique uses a discussion approach called think-pair-share. At the first stage, the students are asked to think of the answers for a number of yes-no questions that require some amount of text analysis and summary. After they decide on answers individually, they make pairs with a partner. They share their ideas and discuss their opinions with their partner. As their discussion progresses, they learn their partners' opinions and they have to back up their opinions by textual evidence to move on to the next stage of the discussion web. As they agree on compromise views, they can move to discuss the issues together with another pair. In the group of four thus achieved, they have to again reach consensus, interpret and discuss their views and finally, they also have to choose a spokesperson who will present their opinions to the whole class. At this point even the most reluctant speakers have been engaged in the discussion within the pair or in the small group. Alvermann explains that by

talking with partners and pairs of partners prior to engaging in whole-class discussion, students have multiple opportunities to interact. (Alvermann, 1991). This technique is a very good way to teach the students how to deal with controversial topics and to promote discussion for all students and can be used for all grades with some adaptations.

2.1.2 Small Group Learning/ Response groups

The idea behind the Small Group Learning technique is quite similar to the discussion web. Again, students are divided into smaller groups (their precise number is not really important, usually about 5 students). Each member of the group has a specific role, such as group leader, note taker ... After reading the text (perhaps the text can be read aloud by one of the students), the group discusses their initial responses to the text, their feelings and impressions. After this stage, the students move on to start the discussion on the questions that have been set by the teacher or that have emerged while reading. Alvermann claims that this way students have more opportunity to practise their language skills, and to benefit from peer teaching. Finally, small-group learning activities allow students to assume and practice a variety of important roles (Alvermann, Phelps, 1994, p. 188). The effective use of discussion in small groups enables the students to connect their previous experiences and expectations to the knowledge they acquired while reading, thus maximizing the learning experience.

Response groups are somewhat similar to small groups learning. This technique again utilises the relative lack of stress while working in a smaller group and assigning roles to each of the group members to ensure the equal participation of the entire group. As a first step after the groups are formed, the students choose a reporter who will at the final stage present the group's findings to the rest of the class. Next, in each group, one student reads the text or a section under discussion aloud. Each member of the group reports in turns their initial reactions, emotions or observations that they encountered while the text was being read to them. These emotions may include even negative ones, such as frustration or lack of understanding. After the initial reactions have been presented, the group moves to the free discussion stage where the students may freely comment on anyone's reactions to the text. This should help the students' effort to understand the text better. Finally, based on the comments of all group members, the reporter presents the group's views to the other groups, thus sharing their conclusions with the class.

2.2 Writing as Reflection

Writing as a form of reflection on reading is used very often, however, it is not always used in a correct way. As reading and writing are very closely related language skills, it is natural to use one to complement the other and to move from the 'receptive' to the 'productive' skill. Reflection in a written form has some specific characteristics that should be noted here. First, it is an excellent way to organize students' response to the text in a logical, efficient way. As writing leaves a persistent record of one's thoughts, it can be used to organize these thoughts, possibly in a better way than through any other form of reflection.

Even though writing as reflection can be a very effective teaching technique, there are several problems that are likely to emerge when reflecting on reading in writing. In contrast to spoken reflection, writing lacks the benefit of immediate feedback. Language itself can also be more demanding if the students want to accurately convey their ideas about the text, particularly their emotional response. Writers cannot use any of the communication devices available to speakers. Facial expression, gestures, tone or intonation are not available or very limited in the written form of communication. On the other hand, these disadvantages can be compensated by a greater clarity of the information that the writer is trying to communicate and grammatical and stylistic techniques for focusing attention on main points. (Harmer, 1991, p. 53). However, these techniques must be known or previously taught to the students to ensure an effective communication process. Also, there is a greater attention paid to the accuracy of written texts. Mistakes that are acceptable or even expected when speaking would seriously disrupt the message of a piece of writing. Written reflection should be logically organized, coherent and should not contain mistakes that prevent the successful communication of the author's message to the reader.

2.2.1 The Writing process

For the writing process to be effective, usually the following framework is used that enables the students to benefit from writing's full potential. There are several stages that each successful writing should go through to ensure that it meets the expectations of both writer and reader. The first stage is pre-writing, when the topic is considered, the audience is specified, the writer chooses an appropriate mode for writing and ideas are organized. This stage is neglected by many unskilled writers but it is in fact one of the most crucial stages of the writing process. The topic in our case comes from the reading assignment, the ideas should be already organized in some way from the reading assignment and the mode and the audience depends on the type of that particular writing. At this stage, various techniques can be used to generate ideas, such as note taking, discussion, brainstorming, outlining etc.

The drafting stage consist of some further organization of the ideas (perhaps using the graphical organizer from the reading assignment), sketching the outline of the piece of writing and adding further arguments to support one's claims. In fact, ideas are added throughout the entire writing process but in the first two stages of the writing process the writer can add them more easily than later on. Language and spelling are not very important at this point, since it is a stage that focuses on ideas and their organization.

The next stage is revising. It consists of the revision and reorganization of the ideas that form the piece of writing. At this stage, the writer should organize his or her ideas to support their claims as accurately as possible. Special attention must be paid to the logical organization of the piece of writing and the cohesion of the argumentation. Questions such as "Is this idea sufficiently supported by evidence? Is the evidence conclusive? Is the argumentation in logical order?" should be asked. During the revision stage, ideas are added or deleted, moved and reorganized to clarify the author's message. The author needs to rethink the ideas to see if they are truly relevant to their piece of writing. Revision can be done individually, in pairs or in larger groups but it is the author that decides which suggestions will be accepted and which will be ignored. Revising is not about correcting

grammar or spelling! While the language inadequacies should not prevent the successful communication of the author's ideas, the language is still not an overly important issue at this point.

The next stage of the writing process is called editing or proofing. Now is the time to pay close attention to the language. Spelling should be checked and the correct usage of grammar structures and mechanics verified. Editing can be done individually or as a peer activity. Nowadays, most word processors are capable to check spelling and grammar in English, so students can use these tools as well if available.

The final stage of the writing process is publishing. At this stage, students should pay attention to how their writing will look, to the visual experience of the reader. If the final draft is in handwriting, the script should be clearly legible, neat with as little apparent last minute corrections as possible. Blue or black ink is usually recommended for optimal readability. Page numbers are usually not required for short pieces of writing but should be included as well for longer ones. The title should be in the centre of the page, separated from the actual text by a space line. Paragraphs should be clearly separated to contribute to the visual flow of the text; usually this can be achieved by indenting or leaving a line space between the paragraphs. And finally, the name of the author should be clearly visible, often it is placed in the top left corner of the paper. Often it is required that the writer turns in their entire output from the writing process, including pre-writing notes, drafts and the final copy.

2.2.2 Possible Modes for Writing

There are many possible modes that can be chosen as a writing activity with special regard to reading. Journals, diaries, fiction, picture books, fact books, requests, applications, reports, interviews, photos and captions, recipes, catalogs, memos, poems, scripts, prophecies, articles, reviews, cartoons, summarizing, note-taking are only some of them (Alvermann, Phelps, 1994, p. 203). The choice is for the teacher to make, depending on the required outcome of the writing activity and the kind of previously covered reading

activity. Various activities require different levels of cognitive thinking according to Bloom's taxonomy (see part A.5 of this thesis) and different levels of language proficiency of the students.

Many of these activities require higher-order thinking and reading beyond the information that is specifically stated in the text. Especially these activities contribute to an increased level of comprehension and a better organization of the ideas extracted from the text and thus enhance the students' learning experience.

2.3 Other possible types of response to reading

Oral or written response to reading is undoubtedly the most commonly used in current classroom practice, and, therefore, this thesis focuses on these types of activities. However, these are only two of the wide variety of possible post-reading activities. Other types of post-reading activities might include a non-linguistic response to the text, such as ordering a sequence of pictures, comparing text and pictures, matching, using illustrations, completing a document or mapping it out. Obviously, the "non-linguistic" term must be considered carefully because it is likely that there will be some kind of linguistic input or output. However, these activities do not focus, for instance, on developing specific language skills but rather on using the linguistic skill to perform some other action. Grellet (1991) notes that although no actual questions need accompany this kind of exercise, it is one of the most useful ones since this is the way we often use what we read and the very fact of being able to make a proper decision will be proof that the student has thought about the text and understood it (p. 20).

Another very interesting area of use for post-reading activities is to use the reading for vocabulary building or reinforcing. Vocabulary is very important for a successful reading process. There are strategies that can help the students understand unknown words using

contextual, morphological or linguistic clues. Various combinations of words and their concepts can be introduced through reading. These include known word/known concept, new word/ known concept, known word/ new concept and new word/ new concept (see Graves, Slater & White, 1989 for more information on this topic). Naturally, vocabulary building should take place throughout the entire reading process, but during the post-reading phase there are possibilities that are not available during the pre-reading and while-reading phases, such as readily used contextual clues or a possible comparison between several different concepts of one word. Newly learned vocabulary can be then reinforced using analogies, matching activities and puzzles or categorizing activities.

3. The effect of appropriate post-reading activities

In the previous part some major theoretical and methodological principles and techniques concerning the reading process and post-reading activities were described. Although this piece of writing cannot hope to address this issue in depth, perhaps, however briefly, several interesting points were covered.

The above described methodological principles, if applied correctly to post-reading activities can significantly increase their efficiency, subsequently increasing the efficiency of the entire reading process. The use of appropriate post-reading activities using these strategies and techniques can therefore significantly contribute to the students' reading comprehension, the use of language for real communication purposes, participation in the EFL classroom and the development of their overall language proficiency.

C. Professional Project

1. Basis

The topic of this thesis is the use of appropriate post-reading activities in the EFL classroom. The practical project that is the basis of this thesis consists of several experimental uses of the aforementioned type of activities in the classroom practice while teaching English to Czech students attending an elementary school during my teaching practice. The practical results of post-reading activities were observed and compared to the theoretical assumptions that have been covered in the previous parts of this thesis.

The following theoretical assumptions were the basic sources for the professional project:

- Reading is an important social and academic skill that is required in daily life.
- Reading in English as a foreign language is a very important language skill.
- There is a direct relation between reading and writing; one influences the other and one cannot exist without the other.
- The teaching of reading must follow certain methodological principles to be successful.
- Post-reading activities that require higher layers of cognitive thinking (see Bloom's taxonomy) can significantly improve the learners' experience in English as a foreign language by promoting more creative and critical thinking, beyond the level of common comprehension.

2. Practical implementation of the model

The model was practically implemented by teaching several reading activities and observing their effects on the reading comprehension of the students. The research methods

were without any doubt very limited and for conclusive results further research would be required. Still, some interesting effects of appropriate post-reading activities had been observed, improved comprehension and an active use of English during the post-reading activities being among the most notable.

3. Characteristics of the classes

The research has been carried out during my teaching practice in the fourth year and during the time I was teaching at a secondary grammar school in Liberec. I spent my teaching practice at the 2nd Elementary School in Turnov. By most of the parameters it is a typical, small town elementary school. There are approximately 600 students who attend this school. All the experimental lessons that concerned post-reading activities were taught in the 7th grade. In the seventh grade there were 16 students who attended English lessons. Managing such a large group of students was not always an easy task and I found the determination of some of them to study to be lacking at times. Their level of English was average – elementary in case of most of them. In this class there was a big problem with using L1 during the English lessons, mainly because it was a common practice tolerated by their teacher. The reading skills of this class were also on an average level, they were only able to move beyond the basic comprehension of the text on a few occasions. The question remains to what degree this was caused by their knowledge of English and to what degree it was caused by inadequate training in reading strategies and techniques.

Another school where I taught and experimented with appropriate post-reading activities was the secondary grammar school Podještědské gymnázium in Liberec. This school is a privately owned secondary education institute that is attended by approximately 180 students.

I worked there as an IT teacher, but because of my other major in English, I was occasionally asked to substitute for colleagues who were not available. In the 3rd grade there

were 12 students that attended English lessons. The difference in numbers was definitely notable and compared to the 7th grade at the elementary school, their attitude towards learning English was much more serious. Also, I was impressed by their level of English which was much higher than I expected based on my experiences. This group met lower-intermediate standards without problems and some of the students were able to use English quite fluently within the limited boundaries of some specific topics. Their reading abilities were quite varied but most of the students in this group were able to grasp the meaning of the texts without any significant problem, provided that the topic and the vocabulary were properly introduced. On a lighter note, one of the factors that might have contributed to the level of language in this class was the fact that most of the class listened to hip-hop music in English and at least some of them apparently tried to use the language they learnt in the classroom.

I also taught the 1st grade students at the secondary grammar school. There were 12 students that attended English lessons. I did not teach them many times and they always seemed quiet compared to other classes. Their level of English was elementary, as would be expected. The students of this group did not know how to use any comprehension or reading strategies and the level of their reading comprehension was also elementary.

4. Lessons plans and reflections

Lesson 1

class/specifics: 3rd grade(secondary grammar school), 12 students, elementary, respond often in Czech aims of the lesson: reading practice, UK people language introduced/practiced/used: present simple, regional British adjectives skills developed: L, S, R, W materials: Click poster (Appendix 1), BB			
Stage 1: Introduction, warm up Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting, date, classroom agenda Introduction of the topic for this lesson – poster, the teacher draws a rough map of the UK on the BB Teacher asks the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What famous Englishman do you know? Where are they from? (students don't have the Click magazine available yet) Brainstorming (the teacher writes the ideas on the BB, names placed into appropriate regions 	What pps do/say Greeting Famous Englishmen Royal family? Pop stars? Actors? Sport stars?	Interaction T-> ss ss -> T ss -> ss	Time 10 min
Motivation 1: the students talk about celebrities and famous people Possible problems 1: the students don't know many famous people			
Stage 2: Reading Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students read the poster (distribute Click magazines) Each has to decide which of the people on the poster is their favourite and think of at least three 	What pps do/say Read the poster Note down the reasons	Interaction T -> ss	Time 10 min

<p>reasons why (they take notes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students match the places with correct adjectives 			
<p>Motivation 2: The students discover new information</p> <p>Possible problems 2: The students don't think of the reasons why the person is their favourite.</p>			
<p>Stage 3: Post-reading: discussion contest</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs, then in groups of four • Compare your choice with your partner(s), compromise on one person per pair (group), convince your opponents! • Teacher monitors, facilitates • After the groups have reached the agreement, they choose a speaker and they defend their choice against the other groups' speakers. Only valid arguments! <p>HW: create a poster similar to one that was used in this lesson</p>	<p>What pps do/say</p> <p>Discuss, present arguments,</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Ss<->ss</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>25 min</p>
<p>Motivation 3: Possibility to present arguments and overcome the opposition of their opponents</p> <p>Possible problems 3: The students are not willing to participate in the discussion – should be countered by the discussion web technique and the competition.</p>			

Reflection 1

This lesson showed me several benefits and problems that are connected with using post-reading activities in the EFL classroom. First, I should mention that I did not teach this particular class on a regular basis, I was only filling in for a colleague who was unavailable at the time. Therefore, I did not know the students' proficiency in English and I could only rely on the information that my colleague provided to me. On the other hand, being a substitute had several advantages. As I was known to the students only as an IT teacher, they did not know what to expect from me either. In fact, this was the first English class that I had substituted at the secondary grammar school. Being just a substitute teacher also left me with some freedom of choice as to what to teach. The regular teacher did not mind that I would bring my own materials to the class and cover them in my way. Actually, she was rather glad that she did not have to prepare the materials for me. I discussed with her my intention of experimenting with some post-reading activity and her only requirement was that the students should have some kind of home assignment. I admit that I did not intend to assign any homework at first but they turned out rather nice at the end.

The initial phase of the lesson went in a standard way. I introduced myself and informed the students that I would be substituting for their regular teacher for that lesson. After the usual attempts at using English for actual classroom communication such as 'Who is absent today?' or 'Could you take the class register to the other group?' I was quite impressed by the fluency of the students' responses. Clearly their teacher used English for classroom communication as well because they responded swiftly and accurately.

As I chose famous people of the UK as a reading topic, I started the pre-reading phase with brainstorming for ideas about UK inhabitants, particularly celebrities. There was some response: as one could expect the Royal family was mentioned, several pop-culture celebrities and sportsmen, such as David Beckham, Prince Charles, Princess Diana and also Ewan McGregor. Much more problematic was to determine the places of origin for all these people.

I did not know them and neither did the students. I did not realize while planning the lesson that this would be an issue, but fortunately it did not affect the lesson very much.

After the pre-reading phase I distributed the magazine with the reading material amongst the students and gave them several minutes to read through the text. As there was not really too much of it, it did not take long. As instructed, the students spent most of their time in this phase deciding on their favourite and figuring out the reasons to back up their opinions. I encouraged them to take notes in the process, so that they would have something to lean on during the upcoming discussion and this also provided me with some visual feedback of their progress.

I decided to experiment with Alvermann's discussion web technique for the post-reading activity. This technique claimed to encourage participation in the discussion. It turned out that I actually underestimated the effectiveness of the discussion web. After I explained the principle to the students (they have never used this specific technique before), they seemed to quickly grasp the idea and finally saw the reason why I insisted upon taking notes in the preparatory stage. I slightly altered the discussion web to increase the attractiveness of the discussion to the students by engaging them in a competition. The last man standing, having convinced all others would be granted the title of the discussion champion of the lesson. As the students started to discuss their arguments in pairs, I browsed through the classroom, monitoring their progress and checking whether they used English. I was warned by their teacher that they have a tendency to slip into Czech while not being under direct control. However, I noticed only occasional use of Czech in the heat of argument, which occasionally became rather fierce. Whether it was caused by the quite enjoyable activity (at least in my opinion) or the technique used for the discussion would be hard to determine but the fact remains that the students used English for the absolute majority of the communication. The only drawback of this approach at that time seemed to be that some students started to disrupt the others with noise and I had to reprimand them to keep their voices quiet. Upon hearing some of the arguments, I also had to remind them that their opinions should be backed up by proper and valid arguments, and that the sentence

“He just looks stupid!” is not much of an argument. I was fortunately able to avoid the discussion being turned into a shouting match or an insult spree. These two complications did not occur to me either while planning the lesson. The vast majority of the students were working in the way that I anticipated and hoped for. The situation was almost identical when the students moved to the ‘groups of four’ stage. Again I had to remind the students that it was the quality of the arguments rather than their personal preferences that should convince them.

After the group stage, the four speakers started to compete against each other. Naturally the four selected speakers were amongst the most eloquent students in the class. I had some difficulties keeping the noise level down because the students tended to support their speakers with cheering. Although I was feeling sorry for being such a spoilsport, I had to keep the noise at a reasonable level. Unfortunately only one pair of final speakers finished their contest when the lesson ended.

Because of this failure in time management the class did not know who the champion of the class was (most likely it would be a girl because there was only one boy in the speaker group). Still, some of the students expressed some positive feedback on this activity even before I had the chance to ask them. Without doubt the lesson served its purpose, engaged the students in the post-reading discussion and the usage of the discussion web proved to be quite effective in engaging all of the students in the discussion. Despite some minor drawbacks such as time management, the lesson served its purpose and engaged the students in a meaningful post-reading communication activity. Furthermore, I was very impressed by the quality of the students’ home assignments.

The results of this lesson and the post-reading discussion in particular is quite convincing. While the warm-up and pre-reading brainstorming passed without much apparent reaction on the students’ side, the combined use of the discussion web technique and a focus on higher layers of cognitive thinking (Bloom, 1956) enable all of the students to actively participate in the discussion and also to engage in some meaningful communication with a specific purpose. There was no ‘wrong’ answer in the discussion, the only thing that

mattered was how the students presented their arguments to convince the others that their opinions have more value or relevance (see Grellet, 1991, p. 9 – 10). This behaviour was even strengthened by the competition factor and resulted in a meaningful and productive use of the post-reading activity, contributing greatly to the success of this lesson in achieving the methodological aim of it.

Lesson 2

class/specifics: 7th grade, 16 students, elementary aims of the lesson: new fashion related vocabulary, reading (reflect stages) language introduced/practiced/used: fashion related vocabulary, past simple tense, future tense skills developed: R, W materials: Adventures Student's Book, Elementary (Appendix 2)			
Stage 1: Introduction, warm up Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting, date, classroom agenda Name labels Introduction of the topic for this lesson – Teacher sticks several pictures on the BB (Elvis Presley, John Travolta, Snoop Dog) How are the pictures related? What are these people famous for? What style of clothing are these people wearing? Can you name any items of their clothing? Brainstorming (the teacher writes the ideas on the BB) 	What pps do/say Greeting, classroom agenda Related: famous, stars, musicians, famous for their music Items of clothing	Interaction T-> ss ss -> T	Time 5 min
Motivation 1: the students activate their previous knowledge Possible problems 1: the students don't know who the people on the BB are			
Stage 2: Pre-reading (SB p. 90) Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students have a look at the four articles, compare the pictures. 	What pps do/say Look at the articles Comment on the fashion styles + list the reasons	Interaction T -> ss Ss ->T	Time 5 min

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which style of clothing do you like or dislike? Why? • Which of these clothing items you don't know how to say in English? • Teacher tries to predict the potentially problematic vocabulary 			
<p>Motivation 2: The students might find various styles entertaining</p> <p>Possible problems 2: The students don't brainstorm enough vocabulary to help the others in the pre-reading stage</p>			
<p>Stage 3: Reading</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students read the four articles • After reading: Have your opinions changed? Why? 	<p>What pps do/say</p> <p>read, comment on possible changes of their opinions</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Ss<->ss</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>10 min</p>
<p>Motivation 3: Possibility to present arguments and overcome the opposition of their opponents</p> <p>Possible problems 3: The students are not willing to participate in the discussion – should be countered by the discussion web technique and the competition.</p>			
<p>Stage 2: Post-reading comprehension exercise (SB p. 90)</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students read the articles and fill in the blanks in reading comprehension exercise 2. • Check the answers in the class 	<p>What pps do/say</p> <p>Fill in the blanks according to the information in the article</p> <p>Check the answers</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>T -> ss</p> <p>Ss ->T</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>10 min</p>
<p>Motivation 4: The students might find it interesting to use the newly acquired knowledge.</p> <p>Possible problems 4: The students won't find it interesting to use the newly acquired knowledge in this way.</p>			

<p>Stage 2: Post-reading activity – write your own view of fashion 200 years in the future. (10 lines)</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students individually brainstorm the ideas • Write the first draft in the class • If there is time, the students can do peer-correction • Finish the article as a home assignment 	<p>What pps do/say</p> <p>Brainstorm the ideas</p> <p>Write the first draft</p> <p>Peer-correction (?)</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>T -> ss Ss ->ss</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>15 min</p>
<p>Motivation 5: The students would be able to do a creative post-reading activity, involving their own ideas</p> <p>Possible problems 5: The students will not be able to finish the draft before the end of the lesson.</p>			

Reflection 2

This was one of the lessons I taught during my teaching practice. My mentor instructed me about what should be covered during this class but after I looked at the textbook, I discovered that the lesson would consist of the traditional read and answer comprehension question exercises, which I feared would be make for a boring lesson. After discussion with my mentor I decided to change the lesson to suit it better for both the students and myself.

The lesson's introductory part went according to expectations. Even at the elementary school it is possible to use English for most of the instructions and questions at this stage, such as to ask about the date of the month, who is absent or asking the students to put their name tags up. The brainstorming and the pre-reading part was quite successful in motivating the students for reading. They found the outfits (especially the disco style) quite entertaining. The only problem was to elicit enough of the much needed vocabulary that was going to be used in the articles. With some effort, this ended up being fairly successful, although not all of the necessary words were covered. I decided to move on because the class spent too much time on this stage and to leave the rest for the while-reading phase of the reading process.

As I discovered during the while-reading phase of the reading, students were quite successful in guessing the unknown words, even though they had not been taught to use contextual or morphological clues before. With my help they were able to guess the meaning of the words such as beehive (haircut), platform boots or baggy (trousers). The students were also able to guess the meaning of Mohican (hairstyle); using their background knowledge (they have seen The Last of the Mohicans movie). Even though I was quite impressed, I cannot assume any credit for this because as I commented before they were not consciously using while-reading strategies. Still this situation would seem to prove the point that even when instructed in the use of such strategies, the readers try to employ them on a subconscious level to facilitate their reading.

After the intensive reading was over, the students moved on to complete the comprehension exercise. The exercise required them to simply fill in the missing words for the appropriate era. It was basically copying the information from one location to another. It would probably come as no surprise that at this stage of the lesson the students' attention level was at its lowest and the noise level was at its highest. I even cut the activity short because the distraction of the students during this activity reached the level when it was not worth continuing to work on this particular activity. The class quickly checked the correct answers – none of the students I asked had wrong answers. This either means that I was incredibly lucky and encountered a class full of perfect students (not likely) or that the activity required almost no thinking ability, so everyone was able to simply copy the information from the article and then relax or, in some cases, start doing some mischief.

The unexpected benefit of cutting the comprehension activity shorter was that there was more time left to work on the post-reading writing activity. I thought that the idea how fashion will look in another two hundred years would provide some interesting alternatives and would be also a good contrast to the article which was written in past simple tense. As there was not much time, I passed only the most crucial instructions, such as reminding the students they should use the future tense and to think about possible changes in the environment and society that are likely to happen in two hundred years. I also wrote the possible title of their article on the blackboard. After a few minutes of brainstorming, I encouraged the students to start writing the first draft, despite the fact that some of them still had trouble to come up with enough ideas. At the end of the lesson, most of the students managed to produce about 10 sentences of their views on the fashion of the future. I encouraged those of the students who finished early to swap their papers with someone who had already finished their work as well and start peer-correction. This served two purposes. First it provided even the students who finished their work earlier with some meaningful work and, of course, it gave them more opportunities to improve their piece of writing.

I urged the students who did not participate in the peer-correction to peer-correct the paper later on with one of their friends, so that they too would benefit from this technique.

They were to bring the revised draft back to the next lesson as their home assignment (see Appendix 2).

In my opinion this lesson was quite successful. It provided me with another example of how sensitive the students can be to the type of activity required of them. The moment they were assigned the task that they did not find attractive or meaningful, the level of students' attention started to drop rapidly. However, this situation was quite successfully remedied by the post-reading follow up activity – the students seemed to welcome the opportunity to express themselves in a creative way. Most of them seemed to enjoy the writing activity and sometimes shared their ideas with their classmates when something funny came across their minds. The activities went basically according to my expectations and I was certainly glad that I chose not to use the textbook later in the lesson.

The results of this lesson, and of the post-reading activity, are perhaps not as clear as in the case of Lesson 1. However, still several interesting and methodologically relevant conclusions can be made.

First, the textbook's simple and straightforward comprehension exercise caused the students to rapidly lose interest in their task. It was very simple and required almost no thinking of their own; certainly not the layers of cognitive thinking that Bloom (1956) categorised and other authors (Grellet, 1991) recommend to promote an active and strategic reading process.

However, as the lesson moved to the post-reading stage writing activity, the students responded to the changed conditions with enthusiasm that was almost shocking compared the previous stage. The post-reading activity which failed to follow the aforementioned principles (i.e. to engage the students in purposeful communication) was not an effective use of precious classroom time. In contrast, the other post-reading activity which took advantage of the unusual setting in the future gave the students a specific purpose (to communicate their thoughts) and provided them with tools and information necessary for the task, this way making it both more challenging and interesting for the students, and also more

successful methodologically, by achieving a more effective and much more thorough improvement of the various skills involved.

Lesson 3

class/specifics: 1st grade (secondary grammar school), 12 students, elementary aims of the lesson: reading and written response to reading. (reflect stages) language introduced/practiced/used: present simple and present continuous, countries and cities skills developed: R, W materials: Adventures Elementary Workbook, BB			
Stage 1: Introduction, warm up Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting, date, classroom agenda Name labels 	What pps do/say Greeting, classroom agenda Make name labels	Interaction T-> ss ss -> T	Time 5 min
Motivation 1: Possible problems 1:			
Stage 2: Brainstorming Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagine it is summer. (Teacher sticks a summer poster on the BB) What activities do you do in summer? Where are you spending your holiday? What do you enjoy doing the most? Where are you spending the holiday of your dreams? What clothes are you wearing for your holiday? (Teacher writes the ideas down on the BB) 	What pps do/say Brainstorm the ideas, places and activities	Interaction T -> ss Ss ->T	Time 5 min
Motivation 2: The students use their own real-life knowledge and their imagination to answer			

Possible problems 2: The students don't brainstorm enough suggestions			
Stage 3: Pre-reading, skimming (Appendix 3) Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the Ex. 1. What is likely to be in the letter? • Skimming through the letter (p. 46.) • After skimming: Match the correct number with the paragraphs of the letter • Check the correct answers in pairs, then in the whole group 	What pps do/say Skim the letter, match the numbers Peer-correct	Interaction T -> ss	Time 10 min
Motivation 3: How do other people spent their holiday? Possible problems 3: The students will start to read intensively rather than skimming/scanning.			
Stage 2: Intensive reading Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students read the letter and answer the questions in reading comprehension exercise 2. • Check the answers in the class. Correct? Why? Where does it say so? 	What pps do/say Read Answer the questions according to the information in the article Check the answers	Interaction T -> ss Ss ->T	Time 15 min
Motivation 4: The students might find it interesting to use the newly acquired knowledge. Possible problems 4: The students won't find it interesting to use the newly acquired knowledge in this way.			

<p>Stage 2: Post-reading activity – write a draft of a postcard from your holiday to your friend, classmate etc.</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students can use the ideas from the pre-reading phase. • First draft only – ideas, not grammar. • Peer-correction for those who finish early. • Redraft at home and use a real postcard. 	<p>What pps do/say</p> <p>Apply background knowledge + ideas brainstormed during the pre-reading phase.</p> <p>Write the first draft</p> <p>Peer-correction (?)</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>T -> ss</p> <p>Ss ->ss</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>10 min</p>
<p>Motivation 5: The students would be able to do a creative post-reading activity</p> <p>Possible problems 5: The students will not be able to finish the draft before the end of the lesson.</p>			

Reflection 3:

When I was informed that I would be substituting for this lesson, I got the instructions to practice the present simple and present continuous tenses with the students. As grammar practice rarely encounters a warm welcome by the students, I chose to 'camouflage it' as a reading/writing activity. This strategy worked quite well and the students were able to practice the required grammar without worrying about it. The students already had a solid grasp of both present simple and present continuous. The idea behind this lesson was to use the students' background knowledge to keep the use of language as real as possible and to promote the motivation of the students using their own ideas and words we elicited. This concept did not work particularly well for this class. First, they were quite shocked when I entered the classroom instead of their regular teacher. Many of them seemed to be rather shy – at least during the first part of the lesson, so eliciting the ideas and brainstorming the necessary vocabulary did not proceed very smoothly. Still, after some struggling and assistance, the students were able to brainstorm enough related vocabulary. It was very helpful that when some of them used the correct grammar structure, I wrote it on the blackboard as well.

The skimming during the pre-reading phase was actually a little experiment to see if such young students who were not instructed in this technique would be able to use it. Of course I did not tell them to skim the letter, they would not know what to do. I was not able to explain skimming in English in a way they would understand, so I explained the technique in Czech. Still, after they opened their books I could see that skimming or no skimming, the students simply read the entire article (intensive reading) and that the effective use of this technique would require further instructions and practice. When I asked the students if they used the skimming at all, most of them admitted that they had simply read the article instead. The result of this situation was that the "skimming" phase took a bit longer but it was compensated by the fact that further intensive reading was not necessary.

Answering the comprehension questions was quite straightforward but with this group of students I did not observe any negative effects on their motivation or concentration (compare Lesson 2). This might have been caused by the presence of an unknown element (me), or perhaps younger students are more respectful or they are more content with simpler activities.

The next stage of the lesson was devoted to a written post-reading activity – writing a draft of a postcard. In fact, the workbook suggested having the students write a letter similar to the one on page 46(Appendix 3) but even when planning the lesson I thought that there would not be enough time even for the first draft and I wanted the students to have some kind of immediate feedback and some peer-correction if possible. Changing the format of this writing to that of a postcard, I was able to make it shorter and easier to write. Most of the students managed to finish the first draft in approximately 10 minutes and some of them were able to do some amount of peer-correction as well. I encouraged all of the students to employ peer-correction even though they did not have time for it in the class. The revised version of the postcard text, preferably written on a real postcard, was assigned as homework. (Appendix 3)

This lesson resulted in several interesting conclusions. Firstly, the teacher should be always ready to improvise and change the lesson plan to accommodate to the changing conditions in the classroom. Secondly, it is unrealistic to expect the students to employ strategies they have never heard of before, much less to employ them correctly in the first try. The effect of the comprehension questions that was very noticeable with the other class (see Lesson 2) was not as conclusive with this group of students.

The post-reading writing activity itself, however, proved quite successful. The reasons are the same as in the above mentioned post-reading activities: pursuing methodologically and theoretically planned principles for writing in English, and more importantly, the fact that students could feel that there was a specific purpose behind the activity. This activity required the student to use the language communicatively to ensure that their message will be understood. They were able to see the result of their effort right in front of them and felt

like using the language to share their message with their friend. The written form and the peer-correction ensured that all of the students participated actively not only in creating their own piece of writing, but also in the one they had corrected. Students produced some very nice postcards as a result of this activity and practiced the desired structure in the process.

4. Project Evaluation

The practical project aimed at proving or refuting the theoretical and methodological claims that are described in the previous parts of this thesis, principally that the use of appropriate post-reading activities will contribute to students' comprehension of written texts, enhance their involvement in the reading process and contribute to the improvement of their language proficiency in general. There were several interesting points during the lessons that would indicate that the previously mentioned assumptions were correct. However, it must be noted that the research carried out had several significant drawbacks that prevented it to prove the aforementioned claims with definite validity.

The project was carried out in two different schools and only in a very limited scale. The conclusions are the result of subjective observations and there were no control groups to compare with the experimental groups to determine the exact amount of influence that the use of appropriate post-reading activities had in the classroom practice.

Yet, the post-reading activities had proven successful and this fact would suggest that the claims made in this thesis are correct. The discussion web technique used in Lesson 1 was very successful in all the aspects that characterize an appropriate post-reading activity. The level of students' motivation and participation was on a very high level and remained so throughout the lesson.

The written form of post-reading activities also showed a marked improvement in the students' attitude towards learning when the post-reading activity following theoretical and methodological principles was employed in Lesson 2. However, the results of Lesson 3 are less conclusive. Obviously, the practical research carried out for the Professional project can only suggest the effects of the appropriate post-reading activities have and additional research would be required to definitely confirm or disprove the assumptions noted above.

5. Conclusion

This thesis attempted to answer some questions about increasing the overall effectiveness of the reading process in general and about the effective use of post-reading activities in particular. In the theoretical and methodological part of this thesis several important conclusions were made. Amongst the most important ones was the emphasis on the integration of the four language skills and, specifically, reading and writing. Tierney & Shanahan claim that

Effective teachers look for ways to integrate reading and writing as often as possible because they know that each process reinforces the other and can lead to improved comprehension and retention of subject area content (Tierney & Shanahan, 1991).

The skill integration proved to be a very important concept when considering the post-reading activities. These activities were successful when the skill integration level was high. The natural application of this concept is to use speaking and writing activities in close relation with reading to take advantage of this fact. Discussion web or paraphrasing are examples of specific techniques that can be used to this effect.

Another important concept is Bloom's taxonomy of learning behaviour. The results of the observations of the students during the lessons seem to suggest that the lower layers of cognitive thinking have lower chances of stimulating the students' motivation for learning and their participation in the learning process.

The application of methodological principles that refer to teaching reading also greatly influenced the effectiveness of the reading process. In particular, the activation of background knowledge, helping students to cope with difficult vocabulary and passages helped students' comprehension to reach higher levels.

The final and most important conclusion is that the use of post-reading activities in the EFL classroom using specific techniques such as the Discussion Web or written reflection, and employing the strategy of simultaneous reflection on the need to employ the higher layers of cognitive thinking during the entire reading process enabled the use of English for purposeful communication, increased the level of participation in the EFL classroom by engaging all of the students in communication and, therefore, it contributed to achieving increased level of students' overall language proficiency.

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Appendix 1

UK

PEOPLE



IRELAND

This is an **Irish dancer**. Irish dancing is famous because of the show *Riverdance*. Northern Ireland is part of the UK. The capital city is Belfast. The Irish people are very friendly.



ENGLAND

This is **Prince William**. His home is in the **English countryside** in Gloucestershire. Some British people are angry because shops, schools and pubs in the countryside are closing and people can't hunt* foxes now.



SCOTLAND

This is **Ewan Macgregor** the actor. He is **Scottish** and he is wearing a kilt. Kilts are traditional Scottish clothes. Scottish men and boys wear them for parties and weddings. The Scottish are famous for their fried* food – they like fried chocolate bars!



WALES

This is **Gavin Henson**, the star of the **Welsh rugby** team. Rugby is the national sport of Wales. The Welsh also love singing, often at rugby matches! They have got their own language (Welsh) and 38% of three to fifteen-year-olds speak it.



CORNWALL

This is a **Cornish surfer**. There are about 250,000 surfers in the UK. Cornwall is in the south-west of England. There are big waves and the sea is warm, but the surfers wear a wetsuit!



LONDON

Do you know that many black British people are from the Caribbean? More than 50% of **black** **Caribbeans** live in London. This lady is dancing at the Notting Hill festival in London. The festival is in August. People dress up, dance and eat Caribbean food.

Place or person?

Match the places with the correct adjectives.

Place

- 1 Cornwall
- 2 Scotland
- 3 Wales
- 4 The Caribbean
- 5 England
- 6 Ireland

Person

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Welsh
- ☐ Cornish
- ☐ English
- ☐ Scottish

The answers are on page 14.

Who is in your country?

Write a list of six people and draw their pictures.

* Wellies – these are a kind of boot. From Wellington Boots.

* WORDS hunt – chasser – cacciare – jagen – polować
fried – frit – fritto – gebraten – gefrituurd – smazony

Appendix 2

Culture File 4

Music and fashion

- 1 Look at the pictures on pages 90 and 91. Which of the music and fashions do you prefer?



- 2 Read the text and complete the table with the words in the box.

flared baggy suits grunge
mini-skirts designer platform dyed
trainers torn messy

Type of music	Fashion
Beatles era	<u>suits</u> for men (1) for women
70s disco	(2) trousers (3) shoes or boots
Punk	black, (4) clothes (5) hair
(6)	dirty and (7) look, lots of layers of clothes
Hip-hop and rap	(8) pants and tops (9) labels expensive (10) or sneakers

- 3 Read the text again and answer the questions.

- Which city is famous for the Beatles?
- Which film showed 70s disco culture and fashion?
- What was punk a reaction against?
- What 90s movement came from punk?
- Where and when did hip-hop start?

The 60s and the Beatles

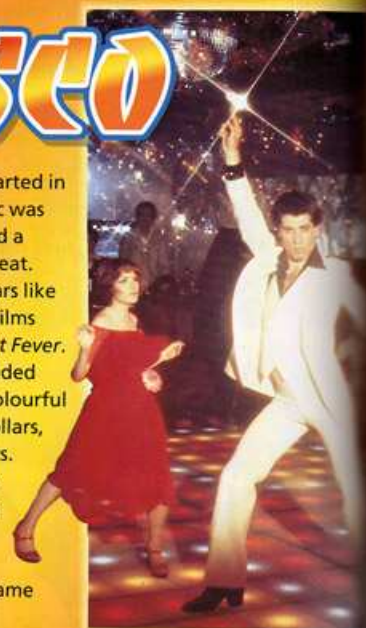
The biggest pop group of the 1960s was the Beatles. The 'Fab Four' came from Liverpool in the UK. They created a new sound and showed that pop music could be intelligent.

In the early 60s the Beatles had mophead haircuts. They wore stylish suits with shirts and ties. Many female fans of the Beatles wore very short skirts (mini-skirts) and long boots. Long straight hair and very tall (beehive) hairstyles were fashionable.



Disco

In the 70s, disco started in the US. Disco music was for dancing – it had a strong, rhythmic beat. Disco produced stars like Sister Sledge and films like *Saturday Night Fever*. Disco fashion included flared trousers, colourful shirts with wide collars, and platform boots. Big Afro hairstyles were popular with black people. In the 90s a lot of disco fashions became popular again.



Punk and grunge

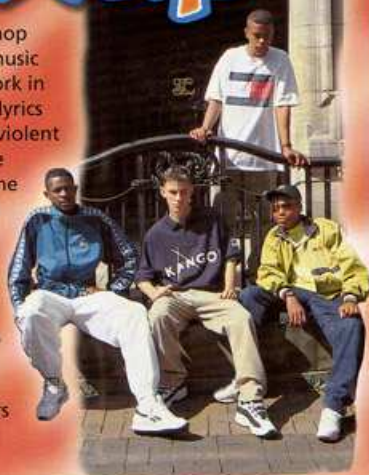
Punk music started in the UK in the 70s. It was a reaction against commercial music and fashion. Many young people liked its anti-social image. Punk fashion was deliberately shocking. Punks wore black, torn clothes, and they had big Doctor Marten boots on their feet. They dyed their hair shocking colours and had spiky haircuts including the famous Mohican style. They also often had pierced ears and noses.

Punk was reborn in the US in the 90s in a new movement called grunge. The music was guitar-based and loud. The grunge look was deliberately dirty and messy, with lots of layers of clothes.



Hip-hop and rap

Black urban hip-hop culture and rap music started in New York in the late 70s. Rap lyrics were sometimes violent and sexist but the movement became very popular and commercially successful. Rap and hip-hop fans wear baggy trousers or pants, baggy tops with designer labels, expensive trainers or sneakers, and jewellery.



4 Listen to Paul, Lisa and Georgia talk about fashion. Match the names to the correct descriptions.

Paul	doesn't follow fashion.
Lisa	wears hip-hop style clothes.
Georgia	likes 70s retro clothes.

5 Listen again and choose a or b.

- Paul likes rap music and ...
a heavy metal. b drum and bass.
- Paul thinks clothes with expensive labels are ...
a better quality. b more comfortable.
- When Lisa goes out, she always wears ...
a flares. b platform shoes.
- Lisa thinks hip-hop styles are ...
a out of date. b ugly.
- Georgia thinks the fashion industry is about ...
a labels. b money.
- She thinks clothes with designers' names are ...
a unfashionable. b advertising.

6 Complete the table with the words in the box.

pants/trousers sneakers/trainers

British English	American English
.....
.....

Project

Make a poster about a type of music. Choose one from the box or use your own ideas.

reggae rock music latin music
dance techno heavy metal

Include information about:

- where and when it started
- famous singers or groups
- the fashions associated with it

Include photos or drawings.

Fashion in the year 2200

I think that in the year 2200 we will all wear very warm clothes because there will be another ice age on the Earth .

We will have to wear only fur coats , anoraks or ^{space suits} scafanders because without it we will freeze . Futhemore we will have to wear masks because there will be very cold and without masks we will have a chilblains on face .

People will shop online in the comfort of their own home . Lastly , normal shops will be bankrupt .



The world of faschion in the year 2200

The world is going to be a lot of different from now. All the pople will need to wear as thin clothes as possible, because there will be very many people on the Earth. Every women and even men are going to have 4nm thick black costume that will fit their figure perfectly if it changes. The black colour will protect them from the Sun too. There will have special boots, that will fly so people could move anywhere. They will have tight caps and huge glasses to hide from the Sun.

ok



THE WORLD OF FASHION IN THE YEAR 2200

I think people will wear soft and airy clothes at home in the year 2200, because it will be very hot and it won't be rainy throughout the year. People will do shopping on the net, because it will be very dangerous to go out, because the air will be very polluted. It'll be hot about 70°C and there won't be any ozone layer. When people will want to go out, they will have to wear boots from steel, masks from steel and overalls from airtight plastic, because streets will be very hot. Schools will be on the net and children and all people will be very fat, because they will be at home all the time.

Perfect



The World of fashion in the year 2200

In the year 2200 people will live underground, because the sun will be very near the our planet. People will wear only shorts or underwear, because underground will be very hot. People will have Artificial source for light, so that people will wear sunglasses with UV filter. They will eat only fruit and vegetables, so that that people will be small. People will not have any pets, because the underground will be very hot. We will not have a elektrocitcy.

electricity



Appendix 3

Reading

- 1** Read the text. Match 1–3 with paragraphs a–d.

The weather. **c**

- 1 Information about Alan.
- 2 The place.
- 3 The people Martina is with.

- 2** Read the text again and choose the correct answers.

What country is Martina in?

- a England **b Scotland** c Wales

- 1 How often does the teacher go to the campsite?
 - a every week
 - b every month
 - c every year
- 2 Does Martina like the campsite?
 - a No. b Yes. c Yes, a lot.
- 3 Has Alan got a computer?
 - a Yes. b No. c We don't know.
- 4 How big is Strathmore?
 - a small b big c very big
- 5 What is the weather like?
 - a hot and dry
 - b cold and dry
 - c cold and wet

Sunny Park Campsite, Scotland
21st April

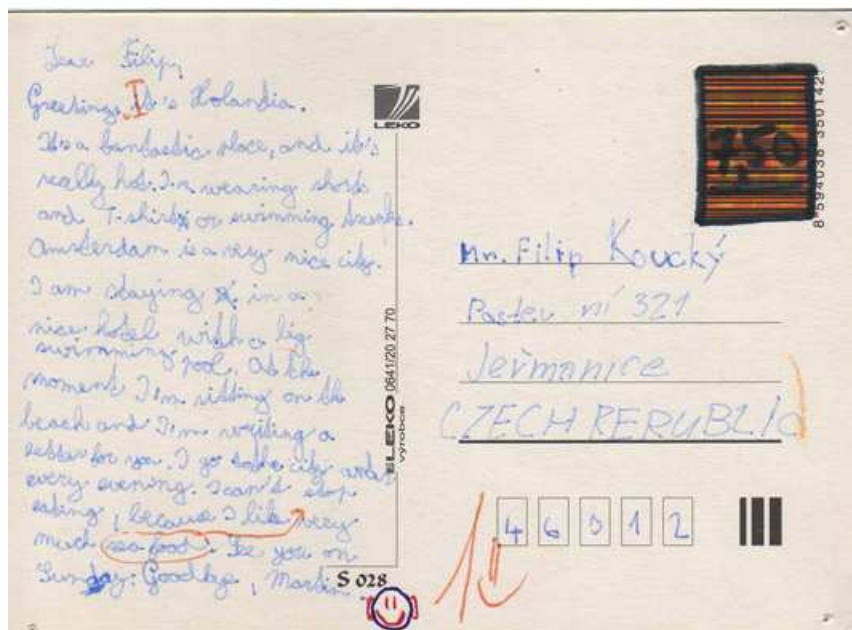
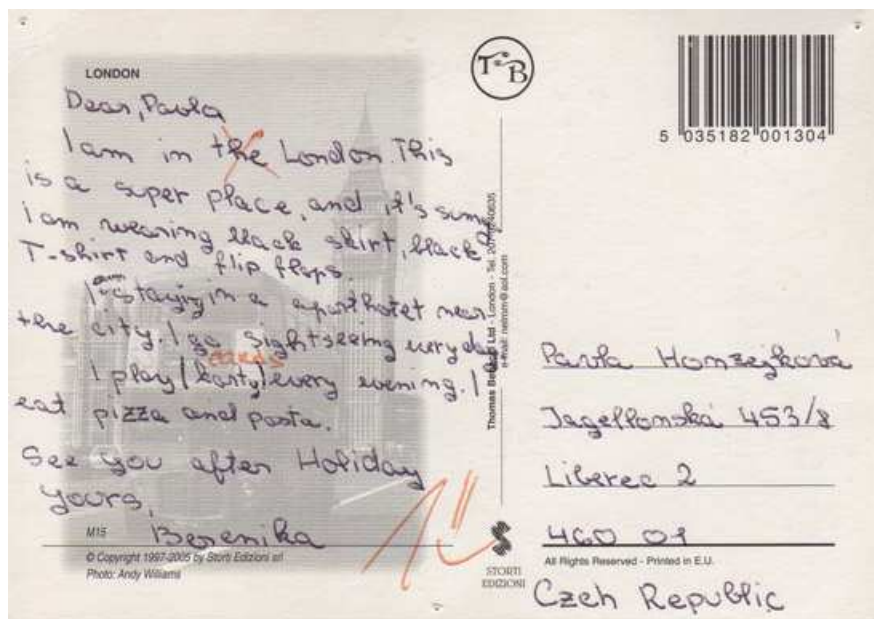
Dear Alan

- a I'm writing this in my tent. My class is on a camping trip with my school. The teacher, Mrs Walsh, visits the campsite every summer with a different class. This year it's us! She's an expert on this area and she knows a lot about it.
- b We're near a town called Strathmore. It's not really a town. It's a village, but it's very interesting. The campsite is brilliant, it's got everything. It's got a games room and an Internet cafe!
- c The weather isn't very good at the moment. I'm wearing two jumpers! It's very cold, but it isn't rainy – I really hate rain! I'm praying for sunny weather.
- d How is everything with you? Is there anything to do in the evenings? Is your computer on the Internet? Have you got an e-mail address? I can send you a message.

Love

Martina xxx





Greetings from Kulna Hora. This is
a super place, and there is really
windy.

Kulna Hora is beautiful and
historic city. We go to mu-
seum and cathedral ~~st.~~

Barbara

We go ~~to~~ shopping every day.
See you on Monday.

Best wishes
Anda

Miss Carol Cook
Lincoln st. 962
New York
43 x 96



1-1

MOUNT KENYA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Mt. Kenya has two major peaks Batian at 5,199m and Nelion at 5,189m. The area has a variety of different vegetations including the giant rosette plants.

Dear Martin,
greetings from Kenya.
Now I'm in the capital
city of Kenya - Nairobi.
The weather is hot and wet.
I'm wearing shorts, T-shirt, hat
and boots.
I'm staying in a small hotel
in the city center of Nairobi.
I'm visiting Safari. Many wild
animals are living in the
safari.
I'm eating their food from corn.
See you soon. Filip



Mr. Martin Nečas
Šumna 742
Liberec 25
Czech Republic



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